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THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN

DURING THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE.

VOL. I.

THE

HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN

DURING

THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE.

BY

FREDERICK WILLIAM WYON.

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HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN

DURING THE

REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE.

CHAPTER I.

In contemplating the progress of Europe through the latter part of the seventeenth century, the attention of the student is arrested by the actions of one man—Louis XIV., King of France. He perceives every continental nation bordering on the dominions of that terrible despot paralyzed by the constant dread of encroachment and invasion. What the King will attempt next can be conjectured only by the precedents he has afforded; and his undertakings have hitherto shown in their design a contempt for the laws of society, and in their execution a degree of cruelty scarcely to be surpassed by those of an ordinary brigand. It will not have escaped the notice of the student that the period at which his Majesty assumes the sceptre is one eminently favourable to a French prince who aspires to subvert the liberties of Europe. The first half of the century has been disastrous to every Power capable under ordinary circumstances of imposing a check upon his ambition. The chivalrous and enterprising spirit of the Spaniards has strangely disappeared. The mightiest and most prosperous nation of the preceding age, they have, under the double calamity of imbecile monarchs and a debasing priesthood, sunk

into a condition of poverty and mental prostration in which it is impossible for them to defend the immense empire built up by their ancestors. Germany has been devastated, and in some regions depopulated, by the longest and bloodiest civil war on record. In Holland alone is to be found a people resolutely determined to fight for their freedom and country. Yet the Dutch are a nation of traders and fishermen rather than of soldiers. Their little Republic, defended only by a small and ill-equipped army of mercenaries, lies open to an invader; and human judgment cannot but mournfully prognosticate the futility of their resistance against an ambitious tyrant, who numbers his warriors by hundreds of thousands. Under such circumstances the reign of Louis commences, and the student perceives him through a course of thirty years taking advantage of the weakness of his neighbours, snatching from Spain a portion of the Netherlands, robbing the Empire of the province of Alsace, invading the peaceful Dutch Republic with the full intention of rooting out the religion and liberties of an industrious people, and bribing the ignoble sovereign of England to connive at and even to assist him in his iniquities. At length the scene changes. The student, not without joy that the hour of retribution has arrived, perceives all Europe banded against the tyrant, and stirred up to enthusiasm by men who have been taught from their cradles that enmity to the King of France is the first duty of every patriot.

It is my design to commence this history from the accession of Queen Anne. But as the war which England, in conjunction with other Powers, carried on against France forms the chief feature of her reign, and as this war was entirely provoked by the conduct of Louis, a brief summary of the French king's policy will, I hope, not be regarded as a superfluous introduction. Upon two occasions in the history of modern times the ambition of France has threatened the liberties of Europe; and upon both it has been the proud fortune of England, by unsparing sacrifices of her children and her wealth, to stem the torrent of invasion, and to roll back upon France a large portion of the calamities which she had designed to inflict on other countries.

At the death of Cardinal Mazarin in 1661 the French

Council was astounded by an announcement from Louis, then in his twenty-third year, of his intention to take the reins of government into his own hands. Up to that period the young King had attracted little notice. He had submitted to remain as passive under the authority of his mother and the Cardinal as his father had submitted to remain under the authority of Mary of Medicis and the Marshal d'Ancre. That a being so exalted as a king should attend personally to business, should read and digest the reports of secretaries and governors, and issue orders upon military and financial matters, seemed to the idle crowd who formed the Court an arrangement against nature. A succession of favourites had been the real governors of France ever since the assassination of Henry IV., a period of fifty years. That Louis XIV. would prove a very different character from his timid and melancholy father was an idea difficult to realise. He had been kept in such seclusion that little was known of him except that he appeared submissive in all things to his mother and the Cardinal, that he was fond of pleasure, that he was an elegant dancer, but that his education had been in other respects totally neglected.*

The death of Mazarin produced a revolution at Court. Louis at once determined to content himself no longer with the empty name of a king. His resolution sprang not from any conscientious scruples, but simply from a love of power. He was unwilling that any creature should share or be thought to share his authority. Almost his first act evinced the tone which would, in future, characterise the government of France. A quarrel about precedence arose between the ambassadors of France and Spain in the streets of London, in which the Frenchman, less numerously attended than his rival, got the worst. All the circumstances of the affair were duly reported by the incensed diplomatist to his master. Louis, burning with indignation, sent instantly to recall his ambassador from Madrid, and gave Philip IV. to understand that, unless he at once recognised the superiority of the French crown, that terrible war between the two kingdoms, which had but recently ceased, should recommence. The pride of the Spanish monarch

* The following narrative is drawn chiefly from French histories of France. I have not thought it necessary to adduce particular authorities.

was forced to give way before the loftily asserted power of France. A year afterwards the Duke de Créqui, by his insufferable bearing at Rome, drew upon himself the vengeance of the papal guard and the mob. Louis, failing to obtain prompt satisfaction for the insults offered to his ambassador, seized on the county of Avignon, and before long the Christian world was scandalized by a spectacle that had never yet been witnessed. A legate, solemnly appointed for the occasion, repaired to the Court of France, not to convey the commands of his Holiness, and to receive the submission of a dutiful son, but humbly to entreat forgiveness for the admitted errors of his master.

By such vigorous action as this, Louis soon made himself an object of terror throughout Europe. It was soon discovered that he held no high sense of the sacredness of treaties when interest prompted him to violate them. In 1662, he, in open contravention of his recent engagements with Spain, dispatched an armament to Lisbon, under the command of Marshal Schomberg, to aid the Portuguese who had revolted from Philip. The courage and skill of the French troops enabled the Portuguese to carry off victory at the battle of Villa-viciosa, and to establish the independence of their nation. Philip not long afterwards died, his last days having been embittered by this treacherous act; and then it was that Louis fully revealed his character to the world. By a second marriage the King of Spain had left an infant son, sickly and feeble to the last degree both in body and mind, to succeed to a vast scattered empire which the genius and activity of a Charlemagne would have been severely tested to defend. Instead of being touched by the utter helplessness of this child, to whom he stood in the relationship of first cousin, Louis took advantage of the opportunity afforded by the disunion and weakness of the Spanish government to put forward an absurd claim of inheritance to several provinces of the Netherlands. An obscure jurist had discovered that, among the ancient laws of Brabant, was a law which appears to have been originally promulgated to discountenance second marriages. It provided that the issue of a first marriage, although female, should succeed to the fiefs of both parents before any child by a subsequent union. In right

of his consort then, Maria Theresa, who sprang from the first marriage of Philip, Louis claimed every province in which it could be found that the succession to property was regulated by this law.

That this claim was totally devoid of foundation is now admitted even by French writers. Not only had the suzerainty of these provinces never devolved in accordance with the laws relating to private property which prevailed in some of them, but the royal succession had been fixed in the most precise manner by an act of the State of Brabant, passed in the reign of Charles V.; and beyond this, even had any rights devolved upon Maria Theresa through her father, Louis had, at the treaty of the Pyrenees and before his marriage had been allowed to take place, expressly renounced them. His agents, indeed, had been ever since repeating in every Court of Europe that this renunciation was not binding; yet no person who had any regard for honesty could understand how an oath, taken in the most solemn form the Church could prescribe, could be regarded as meaningless. Louis, however, cared neither for the arguments nor the indignation of honest men. He knew that he was master of a splendid army, that he could command the talents of the greatest generals of the age, and that the provinces to which he laid claim were quite incapable of making any defence. Thirty-five thousand men were soon assembled at Amiens; and in three months Turenne had routed the handful of troops which the Governor of the Netherlands could oppose to him, and was master of nearly all the important towns of Flanders and Brabant. But this lawless act of violence had spread alarm round Europe. Up to this period the Dutch had been educated in hereditary terror of their old oppressor, the King of Spain, while they had looked upon France, the ancient antagonist of Spain, as their natural ally and protector. All at once the position was changed. The good traders saw that it was no longer Spain, unable to defend her own possessions, that was formidable to their liberties, but the ambitious King of France, who was rapidly advancing his frontiers towards their own. England upon her side, though with far less real cause for alarm, was not without growing uneasiness at the prodigious strides the French king was

making in power. The two maritime nations, in the common terror, laid aside their old jealousies, and formed a league. Sweden, then fallen to a third-rate power; acceded and what was termed the Triple Alliance was concluded, with the object of checking the further progress of Louis. That personage, however, who was little inclined to fighting when any real resistance might be expected, very soon expressed his willingness to accept the conditions which the Allies sought to impose upon him. They were indeed not very hard, since the united Powers, recognising their own inability to evict the King from the towns he had captured in the Netherlands, allowed him to retain them, stipulating only that he would restore Franche Comté, a Spanish province in the midst of France, which the Prince of Condé had overrun in a fortnight, and which could be seized again at any moment. This composition with Louis, humiliating enough to every other Power concerned, was effected at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1668.

In the views of Louis, however, peace meant nothing more than a convenient time for augmenting armies, and intriguing in every court of Europe against the Power he designed to attack next. Two years after the peace, upon a trifling provocation, the Duchy of Lorraine was seized, "as easily," says Voltaire, "as we seize upon Avignon when we are dissatisfied with the Pope." But a much grander enterprise had been for some time planning by Louis. He had not forgiven the Dutch for the part they had taken in the Triple Alliance. He was determined to chastise them for having presumed to imagine that they could control his actions. The high spirit this independent people showed in some dispute with him touching customs duties still further inflamed his resentment. His wounded vanity, his love of conquering, and his desire of being revenged, were, on this occasion, seconded by his zeal for religion. It pleased his imagination to picture himself as a divine instrument for destroying one of the strongholds of heresy. By the spring of 1672 his preparations were complete for overwhelming the little Republic. Never since the commencement of history had preparations so prodigious been made for compassing an object apparently so easy to be attained. Fifty millions of livres, for that age an enormous sum of money, had

been accumulated in the treasury. A large fleet had been constructed. No less than a hundred and fifty thousand men, the most powerful force, if the quality of the troops be considered, the world had yet seen, had been assembled; and alliances had been concluded with several princes, who engaged to assist the invader by land and sea. Of the conduct of England at this period it is painful to speak. By the secret treaty of Dover, Charles II. consented to join his fleet to that of Louis to assist in ruining a prosperous country, the asylum of liberty and the Protestant doctrines. The avalanche descended upon the almost defenceless Republic with irresistible force. Four armies, commanded by the three most experienced and gifted generals it was ever the good fortune of one prince to possess, Condé, Turenne, and Luxembourg, marched simultaneously, but by different routes, upon the devoted provinces. Louis, in person, moved along with the army of Turenne to animate his men by his presence; and with him was Vauban, the father of military engineers, to conduct the sieges. Such little resistance as the Dutch troops could make was borne down in a moment. In twenty-two days, forty strong places were in the hands of the invader. In less than two months, five out of the seven provinces were in the power of the French, and Louis was insolently celebrating his triumph by a performance of the mass in the cathedral of Utrecht, while the panic-stricken burghers of Amsterdam could discern from their walls the fires of his advanced guard. The means by which the Republic was saved at this extremity, the noble devotion of the inhabitants, the exploits of William of Orange, the cutting of the dykes, and the flooding of the country, are too familiar to need repetition. The magnificent Louis was the first to retreat from the enterprise, as soon as it had become one of danger. It was not, however, until more than a year afterwards that Luxembourg, with the last bands of the invading force, quitted the territory of the Republic, leaving behind him an imperishable hatred to the French name, branded on the memories of the Dutch by a thousand acts of oppression and cruelty.

At length, in 1678, Europe again obtained the blessing of peace. By that time Louis, continuing his depredations upon the outlying provinces of Spain and the Empire, had recaptured

Franche Comté, and driven the Imperial troops out of Alsace. At the peace of Nimeguen he was in a condition to dictate almost what terms he pleased. He chose to retain Franche Comté, and the prefecture of the free towns of Alsace. It was at this period that his courtiers, in adoration of that wicked but successful career which had so considerably enlarged the limits of the kingdom, saluted him with the title of "Great."

Holland, Spain, and the Empire, exhausted by war, now gladly laid down their arms, and disbanded their troops. Louis only employed the time in recruiting his diminished companies. The active monarch visited in person every part of his dominions. Vauban went busily to work to strengthen the newly-acquired frontier towns. Fresh fortresses sprang up at every weak point. Colbert, the devoted servant of an ungrateful master, was in the meanwhile directing all the energies of his powerful mind to the improvement of the French navy. Louis watched his time; and no sooner did he perceive that Europe had disarmed, than, in open violation of treaty upon treaty, he seized on the town of Strasburg. It was in vain that the citizens appealed to those German princes who had guaranteed their liberty. The town was finally annexed to the French dominions; and Louis at once commenced those works which render it the barrier of the Rhine and the key of Germany.

This flagrant act excited intense indignation throughout Europe. But the nations, weary of war, contented themselves with exclaiming against the ambition and perfidy of the King. Louis saw their unwillingness to fight, and it encouraged him to recommence his conquests. At a hint from him the Parliament of Metz discovered that several fiefs in the duchy of Luxembourg had, at some remote period, been held of the French crown, and accordingly summoned the King of Spain to appear and do homage for them. As his Catholic Majesty failed to make his appearance on the appointed day, the Parliament went on to decree the confiscation of the duchy. Marshal Créqui was at hand to execute the judgment, and in a very short space of time was master of the coveted territory. While the ministers of Charles were complaining of this act of violence, Louis seized on Courtrai and Dixmude, two towns in Flanders, which he had consented to renounce at the peace of Nimeguen,

and then with calm effrontery offered to restore them on condition of being confirmed in the possession of the duchy of Luxembourg. Stung to the quick by this monstrous proposition, the Government of Spain, helpless and unsupported as it found itself, answered by a declaration of war. Louis desired nothing better. At a signal from him armies poured down upon all parts of the Spanish Empire, upon Brabant, upon Luxembourg, and even crossing the Pyrenees advanced into Catalonia. By this time a new system of warfare had been adopted by the French marshals, which was approved of and encouraged by the pitiless Louis on account of the fright it occasioned. Hitherto the efforts of engineers in besieging a town had been directed principally against the fortifications, while private buildings were respected as far as possible. Louis, however, judging that his interest lay in making himself a terror to every woman and child in Europe, introduced the practice of bombarding. Whatever town lay in the path of the French armies was reduced to ruins. At length the Dutch, who, by their sturdy resistance, had managed to acquire some influence over the French king, induced him to accord peace to Spain, although on terms not a little humiliating to that Power. Any resistance to the all-powerful tyrant was indeed at this period impossible. Spain, under the nominal government of an almost imbecile king, was managed by a quarrelsome set of dissolute nobles, carousing priests, and bedchamber women. The Emperor, nearly as feeble in character as his kinsman Charles, was flying from one place to another, frantic with alarm at the hordes of Turks and Hungarians pressing upon his borders. The Dutch troops, compared with the legions at the command of Louis, were but a handful. And as for England, her sovereign, James II., was too deeply absorbed in his schemes for overthrowing the religion and liberties of his own subjects to attend to what passed on the Continent.

But at length, in 1688, occurred that event which brought England, like a new Power, above the political horizon, and thereby changed the aspect of European affairs. William of Orange, the most resolute and uncompromising of the many foes of Louis, was invited to fill the English throne. At the moment of his departure from Holland, Louis was fortunately

diverted, by some ambitious projects he was pursuing in Germany, from sending an army into the territory of the Republic, which might have frustrated the enterprise. Those projects it is worth while to relate. Two years previously the support which Louis had threatened to give to the pretensions of his sister-in-law, the Duchess of Orleans, to succeed to the Palatinate, had so alarmed Europe that a league was concluded at Augsburg between the Emperor, the Kings of Spain and Sweden, the Elector of Bavaria, and several inferior princes. This proceeding had of course given great umbrage to Louis. He was now endeavouring to procure the election of a creature of his, the Cardinal de Furstemburg, to the vacant archbishopric of Cologne. As it was perfectly understood, however, that the election of Furstemburg would be the same thing as the election of Louis himself, the Emperor had strained his influence to the utmost to oppose it. The Pope, displeased, not without good cause, with some acts of Louis, took the side of the Imperial candidate. The French king acted with his usual vigour and promptitude. He retaliated upon the Pope by again seizing the county of Avignon; and about six weeks before the departure of William two French armies, without any previous declaration of war, were set in motion towards Germany. The towns of Philipsbourg, Heilbron, Heidelburg, Worms, Kaiserslautern, Mayence, Coblence, Trèves were captured, and some of them bombarded. Engrossed, however, to a great extent with the operations of his armies on the Rhine, and having but a poor opinion of William's chances of success in England, Louis contented himself with notifying to the States-general that he would regard any attempt made upon the authority of James as an act of hostility against himself. As soon as intelligence reached him of the Prince's landing in England, he declared war against the Republic.

The commencement of 1689 found Louis engaged in a war with all the Powers of Europe combined; and from this period until very nearly the end of his life, an interval of more than a quarter of a century, he was never again at peace, except for a short space after the treaty of Ryswick. At the outset he perpetrated an act which was then and is still considered as the worst even of his iniquitous career. Conceiving that his eastern frontier

would be more secure if the region between the Rhine and Bavaria were a desert so complete that no army should be able to live in it, he issued orders for laying waste the Palatinate. By this inhuman command he devoted to destruction one of the fairest and most fertile districts of Germany, populated by nearly half a million of souls. Scarce two days' notice was allowed the inhabitants to abandon their homes when the French soldiers were upon them with fire and sword. The towns and villages were reduced to ashes, the vines were torn up, and the people driven away in crowds to beg their living in every country of Europe.

For eight years the war continued. The French marshals found an enemy to engage on every frontier of the kingdom, and fought in Piedmont, Spain, Flanders, and on the Rhine. They were almost uniformly victorious. So vast were the resources of Louis that he could without difficulty oppose an equal force to his antagonists at every point; while being the absolute master of his troops, he could swiftly and secretly accumulate his strength upon whatever quarter he pleased. The movements of the Allies, on the other hand, were made without combination. The interests of the various nations were not identical, and their jealousies of each other were bitter in the extreme. The French marshals also, although constantly hampered by orders from Versailles, framed in utter ignorance of what was actually passing in the field, were as a rule better generals than their opponents. William, although in command of troops who frequently redeemed the disgrace of failure by the most brilliant displays of courage, was no match for such a strategist as Luxembourg. On the Rhine, Prince Louis of Baden showed himself the most haughty, irritable, obstinate, and dilatory of commanders. In Piedmont alone the Allies possessed in Prince Eugene of Savoy a general capable of making head against his antagonist.

By 1697, however, the resources of France had visibly declined. War and bad internal government were combining to ruin the nation. The system of religious persecution, which Louis gradually pushed to extremity, deprived the country of some hundreds of thousands of its most valuable subjects. The ignorance of the successors of Colbert destroyed the resources

of wealth without filling the treasury. Heavy and unequally imposed taxation and the conscription together had told severely upon the numbers of the population. In the course of the war, moreover, Louis had sustained two irreparable losses by death. In 1691 he lost Louvois, his principal minister, to whose energy and devotion to business he owed far more than he had the magnanimity to acknowledge. In the commencement of 1695 he lost his ablest general, Luxembourg. Still, if Louis were now, for the first time in his life, sincerely desirous of peace, the Allies, who had gained nothing by all their efforts, desired it equally. No one showed more eagerness for it than William. It was he who hurried on the treaty of Ryswick, the fourth general peace which had been made in the reign of Louis. It left all parties in much the some position as before the war. France had for eight years been engaged single-handed against all Europe, and so far from having sustained any humiliation, had actually increased her prestige.

We have thus before us the spectacle of a nation, growing each day poorer and more wretched, yet still maintaining a military establishment sufficient to render it a match for all the other nations of Europe together. The reader will perhaps remember, as a parallel to this coincidence, the vast armies with which France overawed the Continent at the close of the eighteenth century, when the State was bankrupt and the people perishing of famine. To be victorious abroad and miserable at home has been but too often the lot of Frenchmen: yet no people, it is just to add, has ever borne suffering with so much cheerfulness, or has shown itself so disposed to submit to sacrifices in order to maintain the military reputation of the kingdom.

How great that suffering was will appear from a very little consideration. The force which Louis kept up numbered four hundred thousand men. To arrive at the population of France at this period we must hazard a conjecture; but it can scarcely have exceeded fifteen millions of souls. If we deduct from this amount one half for females, and divide the remainder by four, to allow for the children, the sick, and the aged among the males, we find that, out of every four or five able-bodied men, one such man must have been a soldier. But in addition to

the drain established by the conscription, the peasantry were pressed miscellaneously and by thousands at a time into the service of the armies, and employed either as pioneers or to raise the lines with which the marshals were in the habit of fortifying their position. These unhappy victims were treated worse than brutes, beaten, starved, and worked to death. No one cared whether they lived or died, so long as their task was accomplished. The consequence of such a system was, not only that the commerce and manufactures of France languished for want of hands, but that even the soil was inadequately cultivated. Upon those proprietors of the soil, meanwhile, whom the conscription spared, the demands of the tax-gatherer became more and more heavy. It will be remembered that a large proportion of the revenue of the State was derived from the taille. This tax, of fixed amount, was divided between the several provinces, was by the provinces distributed among the parishes, and by the parishes among the individuals who formed a parish. If an individual was unable to pay his proportion the parish had to make good the deficiency, and the shortcomings of a parish had to be made up by the province; the principle being that in no case was the King to have less than his due. As, therefore, the contributors to the tax became fewer, the demands on those who were suffered to remain at their work increased in severity. In truth, the misery or exhaustion of the roturier or working class was becoming every year more apparent; yet Louis was constantly imposing fresh taxes, seemingly under the delusion that he had but to double an old imposition or invent a new one to obtain more money. To the misery of his subjects, indeed, he showed himself utterly insensible. While they were struggling in the grasp of the harpies who farmed the taxes, and while crowds of poor creatures were famishing, the fêtes of Fontainebleau and Marly continued as splendid as ever: large sums and estates were lavished on illegitimate children and dependent princes; and the Great King exhibited the magnificence of his taste by the erection of the Hotel des Invalides and the Château of Versailles. At least three hundred thousand of his most valuable subjects he drove from their homes to gratify his bigotry; and from nearly a million of Protestants who remained in the kingdom he cut off, by a

series of tyrannical edicts, almost every means of obtaining a livelihood.*

The peace of Ryswick had been welcomed with fervour by all nations. Amid the general delight, however, a few prudent observers could deplore that not a word had been spoken upon a question which, if allowed to remain open, would infallibly, at no distant date, plunge all Europe again into war. This question was that of the succession to the Spanish monarchy. Charles II., who had been hovering all his life on the borders of the grave, had now sunk into a state of bodily decay in which it was impossible he could survive much longer. He was childless. Who would inherit his immense dominions,—his kingdom of Spain and its colonies in America, his dependencies in Italy and the Netherlands? Three persons laid claim to the succession—the Dauphin, the Emperor, and the Electoral Prince of Bavaria.

Of the abstract rights of these candidates it is unnecessary to speak. Nothing was less probable than that two such autocrats as the King of France and the Emperor would submit their pretensions to any legal tribunal on earth, and rest satisfied with its finding. There could be no doubt but that, if Charles died before some agreement was arrived at, the two Powers would go to war. And it was easy to predict what would be the issue of the contest. The Emperor would doubtless exert all his feeble powers to annoy and harass his rival; but if unassisted by potentates much stronger than himself, he would never wrest the prize from the grasp of Louis.

The Dauphin would thus, with the help of his father, become master of the whole Spanish Empire. It was not unreasonably assumed that his sovereignty would be merely a disguise for the real sovereignty of Louis himself; for every stranger at the Court of France had been struck with the deference with which the tyrannical but stately old King was treated by his children and grandchildren. We can readily imagine, even now that events have demonstrated the fallacy of many of the grounds of

* "Forbonnais, Recherches et considerations sur les finances de France." I admit the estimate I have given of the population of France at this period to be in great measure conjectural. Still it will probably appear rather over than under the mark. The population of England, at the close of the seventeenth century, is generally supposed to have been about six millions.

alarm, the terror with which that generation regarded such a prospect. If France were already strong enough to cope with the other Powers of Europe together, would she not be able, when her dominions were doubled in extent, to conquer and enslave all Christendom? The Dutch had especial reason to dread such a contingency as Louis becoming master of the Spanish dominions: for if he were permitted to act as he pleased in Flanders and Brabant, their liberties could scarcely be expected to endure for another year. England was much more remotely threatened: yet she caught the infection of alarm. Nothing is more deeply impressed on the minds of Englishmen than that the power, the wealth, and security of their country depend upon their holding the supremacy of the seas. Twenty years before this period the power of France had counted for nothing upon the water. Under the energetic administration of Colbert, however, a navy had sprung up, and more than once the English had been humiliated and alarmed by incurring defeat at the hands of a French admiral. If the navy of Spain were added to the navy of France, it might be that the sceptre would pass from Britannia. True, Spain had at present no navy worth consideration; but there was no reason why she should not again become what she had once been, a great maritime Power, if French energy and capital were infused into the country.

Louis, by dint of experience, had formed a sufficiently correct estimate of his neighbours to understand that the Dauphin would not be permitted to become King of Spain without a warm contest. Upon the prospect of having to sustain another war similar to the last he looked with no slight uneasiness. Notwithstanding his ambitious temperament, war had never been at any time of his career exactly pleasing to him. To pillage and annex defenceless States, to overwhelm towns with a force that precluded all resistance, was about the extent to which Louis delighted in fighting. Against the half-starved troops of Spain or the dilatory generals of the Emperor he cared not how often or how long he opposed his veteran regiments and his matchless cavalry. But the instant such real foes as England and Holland appeared in the field he became amenable to reason. A year after the treaty of

Ryswick, Louis took advantage of the presence of Lord Portland in Paris to open a negotiation with William about the Spanish succession. William was also anxious to settle this important question. Neither of the sovereigns, each of whom conceived himself fully competent to conduct his affairs without the intervention of counsellors, admitted to his confidence any persons beyond those few whose participation could not be dispensed with; and the partition of the Spanish dominions was thus arranged with as much secrecy and indifference to the opinions of the various nations concerned as was shown by Napoleon and Alexander on the raft of Tilsit. As much justice, however, was done to the claimants as was consistent with the object of the framers of the treaty to secure the peace of Europe. William protested so strongly against the proposition that the Dauphin should inherit Spain that Louis gave way upon that point. A treaty was at length concluded between France, England, and Holland. It was by this, the first treaty of partition, agreed that the Dauphin should forego his claims to the Spanish crown, and be compensated with the Italian provinces, and also with Guipuscoa, a tract of country bordering on the Pyrenees. The duchy of Milan was reserved for the Archduke Charles, second son of the Emperor, a personage destined, not by merit but by the accident of birth, to fill an important part in the history of subsequent years. The crown of Spain, with its dependencies in the New World and the Netherlands, was to go to the Electoral Prince of Bavaria.

Unfortunately this treaty had not been in existence above five months when the Electoral Prince, a child only seven years old, died. This disaster rendered necessary a second treaty, which was negotiated and signed with as much secrecy as the former one. The three Powers agreed on placing the Archduke Charles in the room of the Electoral Prince. Milan, however, was added to the share of the Dauphin, on the understanding that it was to be exchanged against the duchy of Lorraine, over which Louis had for some time exercised all the rights of a sovereign.

It was now determined to communicate the treaty to the other Powers of Europe, in order to ascertain how far they would be inclined to support it when the period of action

should arrive. To the surprise and grief, at least of William, this endeavour to avert a war everywhere excited nothing but complaint and reproaches. The Ministers of the dying King of Spain were transported with fury. The Spanish ambassador in London presented a remonstrance, couched in such rude terms that William ordered him out of the kingdom. Some allowance should indeed be made for the agony of the haughty grandees. Of the three Powers who had presumed without consulting them to divide the Spanish Empire, one was the ambitious monarch who, for nearly half a century, had been taking advantage of their disunion and weakness to insult and pillage the state; another, the head and chief of the heretics, had, in their eyes, no more right to interfere in Spanish affairs than the Czar of Russia; and the third Power was their own runaway servant. But indignation at the terms of the partition treaty was by no means confined to Spain. In England the cry was raised that the French were to be placed in possession of that very portion of the Spanish possessions from which it was most important to exclude them. If they once obtained a footing in Italy, they would soon acquire the supremacy of the Mediterranean, and the important trade to the Levant would pass into their hands. The Emperor, it might have been supposed, would have been well pleased with a treaty which insured the peaceable succession of a son of his to the throne of Spain; but no party concerned protested against it more violently and obstinately than Leopold. He thought that he was entitled to the whole monarchy, and was indignant at being offered only a part. His feeble understanding was unable to perceive that it was only by a composition with the all-powerful King of France he had a chance of obtaining anything. He was then deeply engaged in some intrigues at the Spanish Court, and was not without strong hopes that the succession of his son might be contrived in a manner more advantageous than by a composition. The queen of the half-witted Charles was his sister-in-law; and both she and another important personage, her confessor, were in favour of an Austrian successor to the throne. A few of the Ministers were on the same side, and even Charles himself cherished a predilection for his Austrian kinsman, and as strong a prejudice as he

was capable of feeling against the King of France. Under such circumstances it seemed not improbable that Charles might be prevailed upon to sign a will bequeathing the Spanish Empire to an Austrian prince.

It was decreed, however, that this hope should be disappointed. If the armies of Leopold were no match for the armies of Louis, much less were the Austrian diplomatists able to compete with the adroit politicians of France. In 1698 had come to the Court of Madrid, as the ambassador of Louis, the Marquis of Harcourt. This perfection of a French noble united every quality which could fascinate the well-born and delight the lower orders. He had won great reputation as a commander, and now showed that his abilities were equally adapted for intriguing in a grossly corrupt Court. The grace with which he dispensed his magnificent hospitality, and the profusion with which he squandered his money upon the innumerable priests and beggars of Madrid, won all hearts. The ancient jealousy of race, the hereditary antipathy which the Spaniard cherished against his ancient enemy, the Frenchman, disappeared before the smiles of the enchanting ambassador. A feeling in favour of the French succession soon began to pervade every class of society. One argument took strong hold of the public mind. If, it was said, the succession should devolve on an Austrian prince, he would be compelled to depend on heretics for his protection; for he would find it impossible to maintain himself against Louis except by calling in the assistance of England and Holland.

On the other hand, the Imperial minister, Count Harrach, haughty and stingy, excited general aversion. This critical time was chosen by the Queen for introducing a regiment of Austrian troops, under the Prince of Darmstadt, into Catalonia, to support, in case of need, herself and her schemes for the succession. The rage excited by the spectacle of foreign troops completed the disgust of the populace for the Austrian party.

A strong faction in favour of France was gradually formed in the Council of State. At the head of that faction was Cardinal Porto-Carrero, Archbishop of Toledo. The character of this high functionary has been attacked with

merciless severity by writers hostile to the state he supported; yet there is no evidence to show that his motives in preferring a French to an Austrian prince were other than patriotic. The views of the Spanish grandees were then directed principally to maintaining the integrity of the empire. If an Austrian prince succeeded to the throne, it could scarcely be doubted that Louis, disappointed and enraged, would seize on every outlying province. But if the whole empire were placed under the protection of Louis, there could be as little doubt that its integrity would be preserved. The personal interest of Porto-Carrero and his faction, it may seem, lay rather in promoting the succession of an Austrian than a French prince. Not improbably several of the grandees indulged a selfish hope that their future sovereign would be as weak and incapable of reforming abuses as their present one, and that they might continue to be lords of misrule. The probability, however, that a French sovereign would be a reformer was infinitely greater than that reforms would be introduced by an Austrian; for however feeble the former might be personally, it was certain that he would be surrounded by the able statesmen of France, and that Spain would really be governed from Versailles. The Cardinal, at all events, applied himself vigorously to the work in hand. He contrived to infuse suspicions about the Queen into the mind of Charles, and to banish her from the royal chamber. Her confessor, who had hitherto controlled the King's conscience, was also turned out, and his place supplied by a creature of the Cardinal. The dying man was then threatened with the terrors of the last judgment unless he bequeathed his possessions to his only rightful heir, a descendant of Maria Theresa. The poor King was tortured with doubts. All his sympathies lay on the side of Austria; while the voice of the Church kept thundering in his ears that his duty was to bequeath the realm to a child of France. At length a gleam of hope rose in his mind. He would consult the Pope. The Cardinal, who was well acquainted with the opinions held by the Pope on this subject, readily assented to the plan. An elaborate case was drawn up and privately submitted to the judgment of the Holy Father. The pontifical chair was then filled by Innocent XII., an old

man, stricken with disease, and who felt himself to be in a dying condition. The suspicions which German and English writers have chosen to attach to the motives which influenced his decision may be dismissed as purely malicious. That any undue partiality could have been entertained by him for the prince who had been harassing and oppressing the papacy during fifty years, it is difficult to imagine. The heirs to the Spanish crown, according to the usual law of inheritance, unquestionably were the descendants of Maria Theresa; and Innocent seems to have been unable to comprehend how the renunciation made by Louis could be considered binding on his posterity. His answer was prompt, and couched in language as strong as Porto-Carrero could desire. The only true and legitimate claimants of the succession, he said, were the children of the Dauphin, and he warned Charles of the danger his soul ran if he permitted himself to be deterred by private sympathies from fulfilling a plain duty. This reply decided the matter. Charles at once signed a will bequeathing the Spanish crown to Philip, Duke of Anjou, the second son of the Dauphin and his heirs, with a remainder to the Archduke Charles. On the first of November, 1700, a month afterwards, he was released from his life of misery.

The news of Charles's death and of the will he had made reached Fontainebleau on the ninth. Louis held that afternoon a council, in which the alternative between accepting the will and adhering to the treaty of partition was discussed during several hours. His Majesty, however, deferred announcing his decision until the following day. The councillors present on the tenth consisted of the Dauphin, the Count of Pontchartrain, Chancellor of France, the Duke of Beauvilliers, President of the Council of Finance, and the Marquis of Torcy, Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Torcy gave his opinion first, and it was for accepting the will. It was true, he admitted, that in doing so his Majesty would violate his engagements with the Powers who had signed the treaty of partition, and that in all probability this violation would entail upon him a war which France in her present condition was ill prepared to sustain. But, on the other hand, should the King decide upon rejecting the will, and adhering to the treaty, a war was still inevitable

for obtaining those parts of the Spanish Empire which the treaty assigned to him. The Spanish Government, it was certain, would resist any attempt at dismemberment. And what war could be more odious and unjust than one waged against a nation whose supreme desire it was to be ruled by a son of France? Nor was it by any means sure that, in such a case, the King would have the assistance of England and Holland. In both those countries such an outcry had been raised against his acquiring a footing in Italy, that it was not improbable that their fleets would be seen on the side of the Spaniards. It was worth consideration also that, if his Majesty refused to give Spain the king she desired, the legacy of Charles would lapse to the House of Austria; and it was needless to remind him how fatal to France had been the union of the Empire and Spain in the time of Charles V.*

Beauvilliers, respected at Court as the pattern of an upright and fearless nobleman, supported a contrary conclusion. He thought it incumbent upon the honour of the King to keep faith with those Powers who had signed the treaty of partition, and predicted that a violation of his engagements with England and Holland would entail upon France a war which would be her ruin.

Pontchartrain summed up with judicial clearness the merits and drawbacks attached to each side of the question. He was too prudent a courtier, however, to commit himself to an opinion of which the wisdom would be judged by the event, and said therefore that his Majesty alone, whose experience surpassed that of his ministers, was capable of deciding which course would be most agreeable to his glory, to the interests of his family, and the good of his subjects.

To the general surprise, the fat and apathetic Dauphin now turned to the King, and spoke with an animation of which he had been thought incapable. He hoped, he said, that his Majesty would not refuse him his lawful inheritance. The kingdom of Spain descended to him from his mother. The renunciation made by his parents at the time of their marriage had not invalidated nor could invalidate his birthright. He was willing to waive his rights in favour of his second son,

* Mémoires de Torcy; Mémoires de St. Simon.

Philip, and should prefer to see him reigning at Madrid than to be himself the sovereign of Naples and Sicily.

Louis then announced that his mind was made up to accept the will, but charged his Ministers not to reveal the secret. Six days afterwards he himself made his determination public at Versailles. The folding doors of the cabinet were thrown open, and the King commanded the throng of courtiers waiting in the antechamber to enter. He cast his eyes majestically over the assembly. "Gentlemen," he said, pointing to the Duke of Anjou, "this is the King of Spain. He has been called to the crown both by his birthright and by the will of the late King. The whole Spanish nation has demanded him of me. It is the decree of Heaven, and I have assented to it with pleasure." Then turning to his grandson, "Be a good Spaniard," he said; "for that is henceforth your first duty. But never forget that you were born a Frenchman, that you may maintain union between the two countries. By that means you will render them happy, and preserve the peace of Europe."

Notice that Louis had accepted the will was at once transmitted to Madrid. Porto-Carrero, whom the late King had appointed president of the Council of Regency, lost no time in proclaiming Philip V., and the proclamation was received with joy. Scarcely a day passed without the populace giving fresh marks of their hatred of the Germans and of the Queen-dowager. In Brussels, Milan, Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, Philip was also proclaimed without any opposition. Within three weeks after the announcement of Louis, the young monarch took leave of his grandfather and set out for his kingdom.

And now that Louis had rendered himself master of one-half of civilised Europe he began to evince some anxiety as to the feelings his ambition and treachery would be likely to excite in England and Holland. The day after he announced his decision in the Council, but before it was made public Torcy had an interview with the English ambassador, the Earl of Manchester. His Majesty, Torcy said, had been considering that the object of the partition treaty was to avert a war. It seemed, however, very unlikely that the arrangement which had been agreed upon would have the desired effect. The

Emperor had not signified his acceptance of it, neither had any of the other Powers to whom it had been communicated promised more than their bare neutrality. It appeared also that the treaty was regarded with much disfavour, both in England and Holland, from apprehensions that the trade to the Levant would suffer if the French were in possession of Naples and Sicily. The will of the late King of Spain now bequeathed the whole monarchy to the Duke of Anjou. What was the King to do under these circumstances? If he declined to accept the bequest, the same courier who brought the will to France had probably orders to proceed to Vienna. The Spanish monarchy would pass to the House of Austria. The King, to obtain that portion of it which the treaty assigned to himself and the Dauphin, would have to conquer the whole. Could the maritime Powers spare a sufficient number of ships to accomplish so vast an enterprise? Would they be willing to submit to the expense it would occasion? His Majesty, in fine, had come to the conclusion that the great consideration of preserving the peace of Europe obliged him to accept the bequest. He wished that events had happened otherwise. The treaty offered France more solid advantages then she was likely to obtain through the will. He trusted, however, that the strength of these reasons would so far prevail with the King of England that there should be no rupture of the good understanding between them.*

In the same spirit in which Torcy had addressed Manchester instructions were written to the King's ambassadors at the various courts. They were told to represent that the case which had actually happened, that the Spanish king would leave his dominions to a French prince, had not been foreseen at the time of making the treaty. The first object of the King of France was to preserve the peace of Europe, and for that end he had been willing to sacrifice the rights of his children. But inasmuch as the Emperor had not thought fit to signify his acceptance of the treaty, it was evident that its provisions could not be executed without a war. The object of the treaty had in consequence failed, and it was therefore only fair to

* The Earl of Manchester to the Earl of Jersey, November $\frac{12}{23}$, 1700, in Tindal's continuation of Rapin.

regard it as virtually cancelled. It was too much to expect that his Majesty would sacrifice the rights of his children, when all that he would get by the sacrifice would be a war with Spain and the Empire.

The ecstasies of pride and delight with which the French people heard that Spain had become a dependency of France rendered them at first careless of the apprehension expressed by a few persons as to the course which would be pursued by other Powers. The Emperor would of course protest, would perhaps make a show of war; but his indignation was of little moment. If the Dutch objected, the King of Spain must try and reduce them to their old obedience; and if England refused to recognise the new monarch, she must be threatened with the guest at St. Germains. The anxiety, however, with which Louis awaited news of William was too plainly visible on his countenance to escape the eye of the English ambassador. His suspense lasted a considerable period. Manchester had duly reported the communication of Torcy; but the only answer returned to him was, that the King desired time for considering the matter. In truth, William had fallen into a state of melancholy, in which the heroic spirit which had animated the defender of Holland and the preserver of the liberties of England seemed to have disappeared. His bodily powers were fast failing. His mind had been overburdened with cares and disappointments. The perpetual obstacles which his Parliament delighted to fling in his path, the hatred and contempt with which he knew himself to be regarded by a strong faction, and the rabid persecution of which his most trusted councillors and his dearest friends were the objects, had excited in his soul a feeling bordering on despair. It seemed now that the discontent which the English Parliament had expressed for the terms of the treaty was regarded by France as an argument for her setting that treaty aside, and annexing, instead of it, the entire Spanish dominions. If it should now appear to Englishmen that the ambition of the French king was fraught with danger to themselves in common with all Europe, they might thank the imprudence of their Parliament, for doing its best to upset a treaty which would have put some limit upon his ambition. What would be the views of the Parliament, which

was about to meet, with respect to this enormous accession to the French king's power it was impossible to foresee. He cared not to act, however, until he had certain knowledge; and he desired moreover to learn in what spirit the matter was taken at other courts, and in other countries.

At the Hague the news of Philip's mounting the throne of Spain and thereby becoming sovereign of the Netherlands, produced at first a burst of fury. For a few days nothing was heard in the streets of that lively city but threats of defiance and war. It soon appeared, however, that the States-general comprised a strong party anxious at all events to maintain peace. A memorial was, after much deliberation, sent to the Dutch resident in Paris for presentation to the King. The States-general expressed a hope that, as the time allowed the Emperor for acceding to the treaty had not yet expired, and as they had renewed their instances to him upon hearing of the death of the King of Spain, his Majesty would reconsider his decision, and adhere to the treaty. To this memorial Louis returned briefly and haughtily that the peace of Europe was so well established by the accession of his grandson to the crown of Spain, that he could not doubt that the States-general approved his acceptance of the will.

The States, like William, desired to gain time. Standing alone, it was of course hopeless for them to attempt to interfere with the King of France, and their prospects of being joined by other Powers were not then bright. To place any dependence upon the Emperor was idle. His irresolution and folly in withholding his acceptance of the treaty was, in their view, the sole cause of the misfortune which had now befallen Europe. What England would do no one could take upon himself to predict. They intimated to the King, therefore, that the constitution of their body rendered it imperative, before recognising, as desired of them, the new King of Spain, to communicate with the states of the several provinces.

While such were the attitudes of England and Holland, the Emperor was surprising the world with the energy of his movements. The mild and feeble Leopold had been driven nearly mad by the failure of the cherished scheme of his life. As soon as he heard of the will he sent instructions to Harrach to

protest against it as having been obtained by improper influence. He resolved, at all events, to prevent a Bourbon from taking possession of the Milanese. That fief, he asserted, had been made over by Charles V. to the Spanish branch of the House of Austria, and had now reverted by a failure of heirs to himself. In the wildness of his anger he quite overlooked his own total inadequacy to cope with the rich and powerful King of France. He forgot the ragged and half-starved condition of his troops, and that the state of his treasury, so far from being able to provide for the wants of an army, barely maintained his own household in decency. Under orders from him one body of troops began its march towards Milan and another to the Rhine. His ambassadors, meanwhile, Zinzendorf at Paris, Goez at the Hague, and Wratislaw at London, made every Court ring with the complaints of their master against the injustice, ambition, and violence of the King of France.

So long as the Emperor stood by himself Louis could afford to despise his rage. He was not ill-acquainted with the financial condition at Vienna, and he knew, moreover, that the imperial soldiers had excited so much hatred by their savage conduct the last time they were in Italy, that every petty prince would unite in arms to oppose their re-entrance. Had it not been for some suspicions as to the fidelity of the Prince of Vaudemont, he would not have thought it necessary to despatch any troops to the quarter threatened. But Louis was not one to neglect precautions. Orders were issued to about sixty battalions scattered through the south of France to proceed to Milan, and Marshal de Tessé was appointed to the command.

Meanwhile, the Council of Regency appointed by the will of Charles had continued to exercise the royal functions. Porto-Carrero and his colleagues seemed anxious to show that they regarded the King of France as their real master, and looked to him for protection. To secure Milan, a command was dispatched to the Prince of Vaudemont to admit a French garrison. As a precaution against the Dutch, orders were sent to the governors of every town in the Netherlands to obey implicitly any instructions they might receive from the King of France. The Council intimated to the Spanish ambassadors at every Court that they were always to act in concert with the

French. In the opinion of Englishmen then in Paris nothing now was needed to complete the union between France and Spain but to take off the duties at the frontier upon the produce of each country; and there was a probability that French energy and Spanish infatuation would effect even this.

Three months had now elapsed since the proclamation of Philip, and so little inclination had been shown either by England or Holland to offer any serious opposition to his title, that Louis thought he might venture to put a little pressure upon the Dutch in order to quicken their decision. In February, 1701, without a syllable of warning, his troops marched into the Netherlands and surprised twenty-two battalions, forming the garrisons of Luxembourg, Nassau, Mons, and some six other towns. The soldiers, however, were not allowed to remain in captivity for a longer period than a messenger took in going to and returning from Versailles. The King gave orders that they should be set at liberty. He merely desired, it seems, to flourish his power in the eyes of the States, and hoped that they would be impressed with a generosity which his courtiers assured him was unexampled. The Dutch troops, however, returned to Holland far more indignant at being ejected from towns of which they had been guaranteed the military possession by the treaty of Ryswick, than grateful for the forbearance of the invader. In truth, this action of Louis, independently of its wickedness, was a grave blunder. He enraged the Dutch beyond hope of forgiveness by surprising their army, and then he restored to them their army, without which their rage would have been impotent. But fortune was still with him. His action, foolish as it was, had the effect designed. It alarmed the States-general. Looking round Europe, they could not discern a single ally upon whose support they could calculate; and it was madness for them to bear all alone the wrath of this powerful and unscrupulous despot. They did, therefore, what was required of them. They intimated to Louis their formal recognition of the title of Philip.

The King of England, meanwhile, had stood by a passive witness, while this foul insult was levelled against his native country. His spirit, doubtless, endured much agony; but to

the world he continued to maintain a demeanour so composed as to surprise even those friends who knew him best. The common opinion was that, with increasing infirmities, had come over him a desire for rest and a disposition to submit. He was, however, then absorbed in an experiment to conciliate his Parliament. Throughout his reign the party from whom he had met with the most inveterate opposition had been that of the Tories. He now desired to ascertain whether, in requiting their rancour with coldness, he had not been acting on a wrong principle, and whether, by taking his enemies into favour, it might be possible to buy off their hatred. During the autumn he had treated the Earl of Rochester, the head of the Tories, with a confidence which constituted him, as far as any servant of William could be, his prime minister. In the hope that Rochester's great influence would be successfully exerted with the Tories, he, in November, dissolved the Parliament, and summoned another to meet in February, 1701. It assembled accordingly on the 10th of February, a day or two after the news reached England of the advance of the French troops into the Netherlands. It was soon apparent that the Tories, as the King had been led to hope, were in a majority; but, unhappily, it was also apparent that this Parliament was as much inclined to be hostile to the King as any preceding one. The terms of the treaty of partition, and the manner in which it had been procured, were eagerly discussed. That such a treaty, involving English interests to some extent, should have been concluded by his Majesty without communicating with any of his subjects except with those few whose privity was indispensable, was regarded by the Parliament as an abuse of the prerogative. The Tories had come up to Westminster with a keen appetite for vengeance upon the old ministers, who had kept them for many years from honours and power, and the treaty afforded them an opportunity for gratifying their inclinations. They succeeded in passing resolutions to impeach the Earl of Portland and the Lords Somers, Orford, and Halifax for negotiating a treaty prejudicial to the trade of the kingdom, and dangerous to the peace of Europe.

The King had, in the speech with which he opened the session, urged the Parliament to consider maturely the altera-

tion in the affairs of Europe which had been produced by the death of the King of Spain and the nomination of his successor. The minds, however, of the great majority of the members of both houses ran almost entirely upon prosecuting the Whigs. Louis had annexed Spain to his dominions without exciting in England any feeling like the alarm which he had caused in Holland. There was a visible reluctance to give William any latitude that might involve the country in a war. By dint of management on the part of his friends, however, a vote was passed requesting him to enter into such negotiations in concert with the States-general and other potentates as might effectually conduce to the mutual safety of all the countries concerned, and the preservation of the peace of Europe. Upon this vote William at once acted. By his instructions Stanhope, the envoy-extraordinary to the States, concerted measures with that body, and the result was that a series of demands was made by England and Holland upon the King of France. Louis was required to promise that in future no troops of his should be kept in the Spanish Netherlands; that for the particular security of his Britannic Majesty the care of Ostend and Newport should be given up to him; and that for the security of the united provinces Dutch garrisons should be allowed in ten other towns. The French ambassador, to whom these demands were presented, could scarcely refrain from laughing. They could not have been higher, he said, if his master had lost four battles.

William, in the meantime, worried by the state of factions at home, had concluded that, for the present, it was advisable to continue on friendly relations with the sovereigns of France and Spain. Some intimation of his feelings was sent to Philip. That monarch wrote a letter to him, announcing his arrival at Madrid, and to this William answered with another recognising his title as King of Spain.

The most sanguine hopes of Louis could hardly have anticipated such meekness on the part of those whom, by his acceptance of the will, he had outraged. With a little prudence for a year or two, a smooth, conciliatory tone adopted towards the Dutch, and some attempts to gratify the English upon matters of trade, there can be little question that Louis would have

been left in peaceable possession, so far as the maritime Powers were concerned, of the splendid acquisition of the Spanish monarchy. But it was fated that, before the year was out, he should forfeit all the advantages of fortune by an act of strange folly. In the month of September, James II., who for twelve years had been living on the hospitality of his brother king, experienced a second stroke of paralysis, which laid him on his death-bed. Three days before he expired, Louis paid him a visit at St. Germains. He came, it seems, prepared to offer to the dying exile the comforting assurance that, if anything happened to him, he would acknowledge his eldest son as King of England; and in the presence of the weeping English, who surrounded the royal couch, and of some of his own courtiers, he made his determination public. Upon the death of James, civilities were exchanged between the courts of Versailles and St. Germains, and Louis paid to the Prince of Wales all the honours of royalty. Only four years had elapsed since, by the treaty of Ryswick, he had accorded the long-refused title of King of England to William, and had engaged to render no assistance to any attempts on the part of the late royal family to recover the throne. His bestowal of a mere empty title upon the Prince involved perhaps no positive infraction of the treaty; but as an act of folly it has been rarely surpassed. It was an insult to William and the English nation, and France had to atone for it by ten years of misery and humiliation.

Up to this time, England had shown a remarkable degree of indifference to the doings of the French king. His annexation of the Netherlands might, it was thought, prove dangerous to the liberties of the Dutch; but, in behalf of the Republic, England was certainly not disposed to bestir herself. All at once a new set of impressions, compounded of terror and injured pride, seized upon the English mind. Since the banishment, or, to use the legal term, the abdication, of James, the prominent anxiety of at least nineteen out of every twenty Englishmen had been lest, by foreign arms or internal treachery, he or his son should regain the throne. That this country should again become the prey of a Popish sovereign was a calamity which appalled the imaginations of all the zealous Protestants of the island. In the first alarm with which the

news was received that Louis had recognised the Prince as King of England, no one thought of attributing his conduct to mere kindness or to a love of ostentation. He could only mean a threat. Before long the Prince would be on our shores with a French army. The City of London took the lead in expressing the general opinion by an address which was transmitted to William in Holland. It was plain, the Corporation said, that the design of the French king was to dethrone his Majesty, to extirpate the Protestant religion, and to invade the liberties and properties of the English people. The address was followed by other addresses from all parts of the country, in every key of patriotic indignation. The subscribers generally exhorted the King to continue his system of alliances, and assured him that, if he should see fit to call a new Parliament, such members should be chosen as would cordially support him.

William had been, during the summer, busily engaged in following the recommendation as to alliances which he had contrived to obtain from his Parliament. Those armies, however, which he was once more engaged in marshalling against his ancient enemy, he felt that he himself would be unable to lead. He had therefore destined for the command an officer whose genius for war surpassed that of any officer with whom he was acquainted. With the Earl of Marlborough he seemed, after a long period of coldness and suspicion, to have become thoroughly reconciled. Their interests indeed were now identical. The great object of William's life was to strike at the power of Louis: the great object of Marlborough was to be the richest subject in England, and this object he saw many ways of attaining if he had the command of great armies during a long war. All his talents as a diplomatist were therefore devoted to carrying out this system of alliances which William had devised. Heinsius, Grand Pensionary of Holland, whose influence over the States-general was exceedingly great, laboured in the same cause with equal determination. It was no easy task to bind together the discordant Powers of Europe, to induce the King of Sweden to withstand the offer of French gold, to make up matters between the King of Prussia and the Emperor, who refused to recognise his title, to get the angry

Imperial Ministers into a reasonable frame of mind, to satisfy the insatiable craving of a number of petty German princes for gold and dignities, and to keep the interests of the commercial Dutch from clashing with the interests of the commercial English. But bribery and flattery, persistence and good temper, effected marvels. Before the winter several important alliances had been contracted; and the understanding between the allied Powers was so good as even to admit of arranging a plan of operations against France in the ensuing year.

The conduct of Louis with regard to the Prince of Wales William at once resented in a manner worthy the sovereign of a great nation. Three messengers were dispatched from Loo in quick succession. One bore instructions to Manchester, at Paris, to retire from France without taking leave: another conveyed the King's commands to the Lords Justices to send the French resident out of England; and a third was dispatched to the King of Sweden, as guarantor of the treaty of Ryswick, to complain that his French Majesty had violated one of its articles. By the addresses which William received from his subjects, he was soon convinced that a great and salutary change had come over them. He had finished his work on the Continent: he was anxious to return to England; but severe illness detained him at the Hague for more than a month. At length, on the fourth of November, he landed at Margate, and a few days after issued a proclamation dissolving the Parliament. He had decided to accept the advice which had been given him in the addresses, and to appeal to the country. The result of the elections exceeded his most sanguine anticipations. Not even in 1689, in the first ebullition of the national gratitude, had a Parliament met so favourably disposed to William as that which assembled on the thirtieth of December, 1701. He opened the session by a speech from the throne, which went right to the heart of the nation. It was translated into several foreign languages, was framed and hung up in almost every house in England and Holland, and, during the first years of the ensuing struggle with France, was reverentially regarded as his Majesty's last exhortation to his subjects and to all Protestants.

The owning of the pretended Prince of Wales, ran this

famous speech, was the highest indignity which could be offered to the sovereign and the nation of England. Such an action should make all men, who had any regard for the religion and tranquillity of their country, consider what further means could be taken to secure the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, and to extinguish the hopes of all pretenders and their open and secret abettors. The French king had, by placing his grandson on the throne of Spain, acquired a position from which to oppress the remainder of Europe. He had become the real master of the whole Spanish monarchy. He had made every part of it so dependent upon himself that he disposed of it as of his own dominions. He had so surrounded his neighbours that they had no resource but in war. In such a state of affairs the interests of England were concerned in the nearest and most sensible manner: in respect of her trade, which would soon become precarious in every branch; in respect of her peace at home; and in respect of that lead which ought to be hers in preserving the liberties of Europe.

The treaties which William had already concluded with the Powers of the Continent were soon laid before the Commons. There was one treaty by which the King of Denmark engaged, for three hundred thousand crowns a year, to furnish four thousand horse and eight thousand foot soldiers for the service of the King of Great Britain and the States-general. No small amount of diplomacy had been employed in procuring this treaty from the King of Denmark. Under ordinary circumstances his Majesty would have been glad to replenish a scanty treasury by letting out his army to any belligerent who offered good terms for the use. But at this period the terror inspired through the north of Europe by Charles of Sweden was so great that the King had shown a very natural reluctance to parting with his defenders. It had been necessary to overcome his scruples, by an engagement on the part of the Allies to assist him with their whole forces in case he were attacked. Marlborough had done his utmost to induce Charles himself to enter the alliance. The conqueror of Denmark, the victor of Narva, and the actual master of fifty thousand good soldiers, would have been no contemptible addition to the might of the Allies. But Louis had been beforehand in bidding for the hero, and it

was much that Marlborough succeeded in inducing him to resist the offers of France, and to abandon for money some old and inconvenient stipulations existing between England and Sweden. The important treaty, which formed the basis of the Grand Alliance, was dated the 7th of September, 1701, and was made between the Emperor, the King, and the States-general. It set forth that nothing could conduce more effectually for establishing the general peace than the procuring of satisfaction to the Emperor on the subject of the Spanish succession, and sufficient security for the dominions and commerce of the Allies. Two months, it was agreed, should be employed in endeavouring to obtain such satisfaction and security by amicable means. If those should fail, then the contracting parties engaged to assist each other with all their forces, according to a specification to be settled in a particular convention. Their objects in a war should be to recover the Spanish Netherlands for a barrier between Holland and France, and to place the Emperor in possession of the duchy of Milan, and of the Italian dominions of the Spanish crown. In favour of the maritime Powers the Emperor consented to their retaining whatever lands and cities they could seize belonging to the Spaniards in the Indies. The confederates should faithfully communicate to one another their designs, and no party should treat of peace or truce except jointly with the rest. To settle the quota of troops which each ally was to bring into the field was a work of some difficulty. The Emperor at length bound himself to furnish ninety thousand men, and the States-general ten thousand. William was of course unable to promise any specific number of men without previously obtaining the sanction of Parliament. He seems, however, to have engaged to use his best endeavours that forty thousand soldiers should be the quota of England.*

In the present temper of the House of Commons these treaties were received as evidence of the wisdom and energy of the sovereign, and a vote of supply was passed to aid in carrying them into effect. The feeling of the nation was known to run so violently in favour of war, that the most rancorous detractors

* The treaties are set forth in the Mémoires de Lamberty and Tindal's continuation.

of William and the extreme supporters of peace deemed it prudent for the moment to be silent. The Whigs, although still inferior in numbers to the Tories, were suffered to carry almost what measures they pleased. At their instigation an address was presented to William suggesting that an article should be added to the treaties making it an essential condition of peace that the King of France should offer reparation for the indignity he had put upon his Majesty and the nation in owning the pretended Prince of Wales. A bill was passed, not however without strong signs of disapprobation from the Tories, attainting this unfortunate youth of high treason for the crime of assuming the title of King of England. This measure, cruel in appearance, was followed by another which was in reality cruel and tyrannical. The fear which pervaded nearly the whole population of England that the House of Stuart would recover the throne, amounted in the Whigs to a morbid and unreasonable alarm. Every Tory was, in the eyes of a professed Whig, a Jacobite. The party, eager to reveal to the sovereign and the world the justice of its suspicions, devised a touchstone for ascertaining who was a good subject and who a Jacobite. The Abjuration Bill, as it was termed, was brought in, and after much bandying to and fro between the houses of legislature, was suffered to pass. Under its provisions every person holding office, down to schoolmasters and tutors in private families, was required to acknowledge William as his lawful and rightful sovereign, and to declare his conscientious belief that the person who pretended to be Prince of Wales during the lifetime of the late King James had no right or title whatever to the realm.

The injustice which this bill was calculated to inflict upon peaceable and well-meaning men of scrupulous consciences is at once apparent. For centuries the Church had been inculcating as a doctrine almost necessary to salvation a belief in the divine and indefeasible right of sovereigns. Who, then, a devout Churchman would ask, could be the lawful and rightful sovereign except the eldest son of the deceased James? William might be permitted for the national welfare to exercise the royal functions; but lawful and rightful sovereign he could not be. The right was in James and his heirs, and could not be defeated by any act of man. St. Paul had fortunately provided

an escape for Christians in such difficulties by enjoining them not to meddle with questions about dynasties, but to submit to whomsoever had the power of compelling obedience. A scrupulous believer might therefore satisfy his conscience with such arguments as these: James is, no doubt, my lawful and rightful sovereign; but William is the power whom I am enjoined by Scripture to obey. If Providence should so order it that James should recover his throne, my duty will revert to him; yet so long as he is powerless my duty is to William, and I must not, consistently with my duty, render to my lawful and rightful sovereign any assistance to regain his dominions. A person who should reason in this manner, and there can be little doubt that some such reasoning stayed and comforted the consciences of thousands at this period, could not be regarded as a dangerous subject. To force such a person therefore to the alternative of violating his convictions of right or of abandoning his means of living was nothing but needless tyranny. The bill affords a melancholy instance of the mischief which arises when men holding strong opinions upon metaphysical questions attain to power. The same spirit which induced the Whigs to dictate on mere matters of conscience to the Tories, actuated Ferdinand II. and Louis XIV. in those atrocious edicts which they issued to their subjects on the score of religion.

To William, a foreigner totally ignorant of the composition of the English mind, the Abjuration Bill naturally presented none of those features of tyranny and injustice which it presents to the critic of the nineteenth century. He saw in it only another security added to the securities already in existence that no friend and dependant of Louis should succeed to the English throne. His last political act was to delegate his authority to a commission which gave the bill his royal assent.

The death of William occurred at a critical period. The system of aggression which Louis had pursued during forty years had at length provoked its just retribution. All the great Powers were united in a crusade against France. A war was about to commence, the most general which Europe had yet seen. England, Holland, and the Empire were leagued against France and Spain, and it seemed barely possible for the minor Powers to escape being drawn into the contest. I pur-

pose to close this chapter with a brief review of the resources of the combatants.

The standing army of France in 1660 probably amounted to about ninety thousand men. This force, even then sufficient to overawe every surrounding nation, had been increased until, during the wars towards the close of the century, it was estimated to be not far short of four hundred thousand. In point of courage and discipline the French troops were regarded as having no equals. Even their accoutrements moved the envy of Spaniards and Germans. The fleet was on a scale which may excite astonishment even at the present day. In 1690 the King possessed no less than a hundred and ten ships of war, each carrying from sixty to a hundred and four guns. A hundred thousand sailors manned this formidable navy. That the nation, with such burdens upon its resources, could be rich and thriving was of course impossible; and those resources, such as they were, had been grievously impaired by the bigotry of Louis and the incapacity of his financial counsellors. Both the manufactures and the commerce of France had been all but extinguished by the cruel and absurd persecutions of the Protestants. The King's revenue, derived principally from taxes on land, amounted at the beginning of his actual reign to eighty-four millions of livres. At the close of the century it had increased to a hundred and nineteen millions; but between 1702 and 1712, a period of frightful distress, it declined to about a hundred millions. Before 1700, however, a debt had rolled up which absorbed fifty millions annually for interest, so that the revenue applicable to war, government, and the King's personal extravagancies did not exceed fifty millions. This amount was insufficient to cover expenditure in periods of profound peace. In every war which the King had undertaken he had been compelled to borrow money, and the manner adopted towards the royal creditors was not calculated to inspire the confidence of capitalists. So low had the King's credit fallen indeed that it was obvious that in future his only alternative would lie between promising usurious rates of interest for money or taking money by force.*

* I have extracted these details about finance with much difficulty from Forbonnais. They must not be regarded as more than an approximation to the

It was evident that in the war about to commence Louis would have to protect not only his own frontiers, but also all the scattered dominions of Spain. From his grandson it was hopeless to expect assistance. The splendid Spanish navy had rotted away almost to the last ship. The Spanish troops dispersed about the empire would have been shamed, in point of discipline and equipment, by the brigands of some countries. The royal treasury was empty, and the unparalleled destitution prevailing all over Spain might be regarded as an augury that it could not speedily be replenished. Philip, in fact, looked to his grandfather to supply him with efficient statesmen, ships, soldiers, arms, ammunition, and money.

England presented a remarkable contrast to the great military power of France. The entire number of professional soldiers which the jealousy of the Parliament permitted William to retain after the peace of Ryswick was only seven thousand in England and twelve thousand in Ireland. But the pride and glory of the country lay in its incomparable fleet. It numbered no less than a hundred and seventy-four ships of war, each carrying from twenty-four to a hundred and ten guns, in addition to innumerable fire-ships and gunboats, or yachts, as these were then termed. The size and gorgeous decorations of the interiors of our first-rates were subjects upon which it was the delight of every Englishman to expatiate. Beside the ships of other nations these vessels appeared, in his admiring eyes, as floating palaces. The public revenue at the close of the century did not exceed two millions four hundred thousand pounds, a sum not half that which was annually raised by the King of France. Yet the large debt due from the French crown and the high rate of interest payable for that debt probably produced something near equality between the revenues of England and France applicable for state purposes. The debt of England amounted to six millions seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds, nearly the whole of which had been incurred during the reign of William, and the deduction from the state revenues on account of this debt was four hundred

truth. The financial condition of France presents at this period a perfect labyrinth of confusion. During the war, the King's expenditure averaged about two hundred millions of livres annually.

and fifty thousand pounds. The public credit was, however, excellent. An English minister could congratulate himself that, while the King of France would find it difficult to obtain a loan at fifteen or twenty per cent. interest, he could obtain as much money as he pleased by a promise of paying six per cent.*

The resources of Holland resembled in some respects the resources of England. Her native army was small, but her fleet was fine, admirably manned and directed, and her public credit was good. The power of Holland at the close of the seventeenth century was relatively much greater than it is now. The small extent of her territory, scarcely larger than Wales or a single province of France, has prevented her from keeping pace with the growth of surrounding nations. But at the period of which I write she was entitled to be regarded as a Power of the first magnitude. She had been able to repel the enormous military strength of France, and had frequently disputed with England the supremacy of the seas. A review of the internal state of the Republic fills the mind of the student with admiration. It was estimated that in 1669 its seven provinces contained two millions four hundred thousand souls, and that of this population only two hundred thousand persons, comprising the gentry, the officers of government, soldiers, invalids, and beggars, were not employed in the production of wealth. The riches of the state showed themselves by unmistakable signs—by streets composed of the finest houses in Europe, by public buildings erected at enormous cost, by banks and exchanges constantly filled with busy men, and by ports crowded with shipping. It was said that Holland, although not a corn-producing country, was by her commerce with Muscovy and Poland, Sicily and Barbary, the granary of the world; and that although she possessed not a vineyard, the finest wines could be bought at the Hague at cheaper rates than in Paris. The trade of the Dutch in distant countries, and especially in the East Indies, seems at this period to have equalled, if it did not even surpass, the trade of the English. Poverty was little known, and the houses of the merchant

* Political State of England; Davenant's Discourses on the Revenues, 1698. In addition to the funded, there was a large floating debt. The total indebtedness of the country Davenant estimated at seventeen millions and a half.

princes of the Republic were filled in far greater profusion with the luxuries procured by trade than the homes of the English gentry. It was no pleasant reflection to our ancestors that the origin of Dutch prosperity and power was the fisheries of the Northern Ocean, to which the English had enjoyed equal if not greater facilities of access, but which they had perversely and unaccountably neglected. Those fisheries, in addition to filling the country with wealth, had reared a hardy race of sailors which extended the commerce of the nation over the globe. To the happiness of the Dutch as a people there was but one drawback, the defencelessness of their frontiers against the aggression and ever-advancing power of France.*

The riches of England and Holland contrast strangely with the resources of that Power which, looking to the much larger quota of troops it had agreed to furnish, ought to be considered as the principal member of the Grand Alliance. Soldiers in plenty the Emperor could indeed procure if he could find money to maintain them. But poverty seemed to be the natural condition of that prince who was the nominal lord of all the dukes and princes of Germany, and to whom were attributed the most magnificent titles in Europe. Except in his capacity of Duke of the poor states of Austria, the Emperor had no certain revenues whatever. The Empire, as an institution in actual force, had ceased to exist from the time of the Reformation. Two of its greatest members, the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony, had then practically separated from the confederation, and had since made little recognition of imperial rights except in occasionally soliciting a title. The present Emperor Leopold was a sickly, melancholy man, little adapted to contend with the difficulties of his station. But on this occasion his extreme wrath against Louis seemed for a moment to have braced his feeble character, and notwithstanding his poverty he had contrived to place in the field some large armies. One of these, commanded by a general whose fame was shortly to be spread through Europe, had been during the season of 1701 making head against the French in Italy.

Such, then, were the position and power of the respective

* Les Délices des Pays-Bas, Brussels, 1711; A New Description of Holland, 1701.

combatants, and some reflections will naturally occur to the thoughtful reader. In the first place, it was probable that France would merely maintain a defensive attitude, and leave to the Allies, who had forced this war upon her, the difficult business of attacking. Under such circumstances, the chances might seem to be that France would in time exhaust her assailants. It was evident that, if the Allies held to their respective quotas of forces, the balance of military strength would be greatly in her favour. She would outnumber the Allies at all points—in the Netherlands, on the Rhine, and in Italy. The Emperor was the only party who had engaged to bring a sufficient force into the field: yet if he kept his word and actually raised ninety thousand men, it might be anticipated as a certainty that much of the burden of maintaining them would be thrown upon his richer confederates. For England and Holland the war promised to be an expensive affair. In neither of those rich and commercial countries was the unprofitable profession of a soldier held in much esteem. To tempt natives into the ranks, therefore, they would be compelled to offer much higher pay than would content a Frenchman or a German. But a large area of recruiting ground was open to them in Denmark and North Germany, and the poverty and populousness of those countries were guarantees that, so long as the Allies were able and willing to find money, the supply of mercenaries would be inexhaustible.

In addition to probable superiority in point of military strength, France might seem to possess a second advantage. Louis had in the war but one definite object, that of retaining in his grasp those Spanish dominions of which he had allowed his grandson to assume the sovereignty. Of all his enormous resources he was absolute master. He could, without fear of contradiction, order his armies and marshals from one end of Europe to the other, and combine or separate them as emergencies required. But the Grand Alliance was a most heterogeneous body without a head. Between the despotic Emperor, constitutional England, and republican Holland, there was scarcely a sentiment in common, except detestation of France. The interests of Holland and of the Emperor in the war were quite dissimilar. To Holland it could not be very material

whether a Bourbon or a prince of the House of Hapsburg reigned in Madrid and Naples, so long as the Netherlands were not visibly in the hands of the King of France. It was essential to her safety that between her frontiers and that of the aggressive Louis there should be some independent power. If, therefore, she succeeded, with the aid of her allies, in wresting the fortresses of the Spanish Netherlands out of the hands of the French king, her object in the war was accomplished. Philip, for all that could interest her, might continue to reign in every other part of the world. But the Emperor was contending, not for safety, but for ambition. Nothing would satisfy him short of depriving Philip of the crown of Spain and setting that crown upon the head of his own son. For the security of Holland he cared nothing. It was probable that both Powers would be true to their own immediate interests, that the Emperor would not send a soldier into the Netherlands to save Holland from a second invasion, and that Holland would begrudge every battalion which the exigencies of war required her to send to a distance from her own soil.

Indeed, the best chance for the success of the Allies seemed to be that England should be permitted to exercise a controlling influence in their counsels. Yet, of all the Powers concerned in this war, England was certainly the least interested in its results. The objects for which the Emperor and Holland were contending were well defined. Holland wanted a barrier in the Netherlands, and the Emperor wanted Spain and Italy. But England had really no demands to make upon France except that satisfaction should be given to her allies. The insult which Louis had so thoughtlessly levelled against her he had striven his utmost to explain away, and a calm reasoner must have owned that, foolish as his action was in acknowledging the Prince of Wales, it afforded no ground for imputing to him any evil designs against England. But indignation had in English minds been quickly followed by alarm. The King was aspiring at universal dominion: he was already master of Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands: his next steps would be to enslave Holland, and to send over the Pretender with an army. England would become a Catholic country and the vassal of France. Such was the train of reasoning which

induced this country to put forth its whole strength in the war. It was not thought necessary to wait until Louis gave proof that he entertained the ambitious projects ascribed to him. It was not thought worth while to calculate whether any power on earth could force upon the English a sovereign whom they were determined not to have. It was not considered that a war undertaken merely upon suspicion cannot be justified to heaven or to man. Nor was it considered that, if fortune should be adverse to the Allies, France would have some kind of pretext for attempting to inflict upon England, as a measure of retaliation, the evil she so much dreaded. The only arguments which the minds of Englishmen could admit at this period were, that France had grown too great and powerful, that she threatened to extinguish the liberties of every State in Europe, and that therefore it was the interest of every State in Europe to try and reduce her before it was too late. For these reasons had England engaged to assist the Allies with her whole power; and the only compensation she proposed to herself for the expense and bloodshed the war was certain to occasion was to witness the humiliation of France and the aggrandisement of Holland and the Emperor.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY on the morning of Sunday, the 8th of March, 1702, William III. expired in Kensington Palace. Upon his death the crown devolved, in accordance with the provisions of the bill of rights and succession passed in 1689, upon the Princess Anne. It was from the first inevitable that great alterations would be made in the system of internal government. It might even have been apprehended that those great schemes of foreign policy which had been the principal object of the last reign, and which had at length been brought to maturity, would now be abandoned. Just on the brink of declaring war against France, the chief power had passed from an intellectual and energetic prince to a lady of feeble understanding, known to be attached to a party which regarded the exaltation of the Church and the suppression of Dissent as the highest objects of statesmanship, and to be wholly governed by a female favourite. It is important, therefore, to consider first the character of the new sovereign, and secondly the character of those by whom it was likely she would be influenced.

There are several portraits of Anne in existence; and after making allowance for the courtliness of the painter, it must be pronounced that her Majesty presents to the world an exceedingly good-humoured countenance. It is impossible to contemplate the features of Elizabeth without a feeling of compassion for the people who lived under the power of that cruel-looking, thin-lipped, high-nosed incarnation of despotism. But the pictures of Anne inspire no such awe. There is a fat, maternal look about them which, although sometimes striking us as vulgar, affords a sufficient warranty that her Majesty was not likely to turn her kingdom into a shambles. Piety and a love of good feeding are suggested as being probable character-

istics of the owner of those features. The arm and hand are usually displayed with such prominence as to leave us in no doubt that her Majesty especially valued herself upon their whiteness or contour. It is to be hoped that her husband, the party principally concerned with these charms, held them in proper appreciation.

From her infancy she had been an object of affectionate solicitude to the nation. With her father an avowed Papist, and her uncle, the reigning sovereign, a suspected one, it was not unreasonably apprehended that the orthodoxy of the Princess was in imminent danger of being corrupted. When she was but four years old all England was thrown into alarm by her being sent into France for the professed object of being cured of a weakness in her eyes. The relief was great when, after a few months' absence, she returned in improved health and as sound a Protestant as before. Charles was too sensible a man and understood his subjects too well to allow his brother to have his own way in the education of children who might one day ascend the throne. He was determined that both Mary and Anne should be brought up as Protestants. He went so far even as to gratify the wishes of his subjects on this point at the expense of his own inclinations. No Protestant divine was less in favour at court than Doctor Compton, dean of the royal chapel. His manners savoured too much of the rough soldiering life he had followed until his thirtieth year to please the fastidious taste of Charles. The energy with which he thundered against the Papists wearied and disgusted the careless but temperate monarch. But his activity and reputed success in making converts had made him popular. To this, the most zealous apostle for the reformed doctrines to be found in the entire body of the clergy, was confided the religious education of the princesses Mary and Anne. The result equalled the most sanguine expectations. Long before the princesses had grown into women their minds had become proof against any attempt which their father or his priests could make to pervert them.

In the year 1677 Mary became the wife of a distinguished pillar of the Protestant faith, the Prince of Orange. James, who had been naturally much averse to this marriage, conceived

that, as compensation for the sacrifice of his eldest daughter, he should be permitted to select the husband of his second. But on this point Charles, anxious to avoid any disagreement with his Parliament and subjects, remained firm. A Protestant husband was sought for Anne. George, son of the Elector of Hanover, and who afterwards ascended the English throne, came over to pay his addresses in 1681; but, before commencing operations, he received his recall from his father, who had been negociating with the Duke of Zell, and who had decided that a match with a daughter of that potentate would be more profitable to the family then a marriage with the English princess.* The next suitor for Anne was George, a younger son of the King of Denmark, and to him she was united on the 28th of July, 1683. The mental capacity of this prince was little superior to that of Slender in the play. His silence and stupid looks rendered him the standing jest of Charles: James scarcely thought him worth the trouble of attempting to pervert; and William seems often to have almost forgotten his existence. But he made a faithful, affectionate, and assiduous husband, and Anne was fondly attached to him. She became a mother no less than seventeen times: but with the exception of a son, the Duke of Gloucester, who reached the age of nine years, all his children were either still-born or died immediately after birth.

Upon the occasion of forming an establishment for Anne at the time of her marriage, she preferred a very particular request to the King through her father, that her intimate friend from childhood, Sarah, Lady Churchill, might be appointed one of the ladies of her bedchamber. The request was granted without difficulty. No one could then have foreseen the momentous consequences that would result from this appointment. But the friendship and the quarrels between Anne and this lady have left their traces upon the history of Europe.†

Richard Jennings, the father of two girls, each of whom was destined to attain the rank of a duchess, was a country gentle-

* It is possible that in this circumstance we have one of the causes of that dislike which Anne subsequently manifested for the Elector and his family.

† This account of the Marlboroughs and their rise at court, I have drawn from the several biographies of them, and from Hamilton's Memoirs.

man of good family and moderate estate, living at Sandridge, near St. Albans. His principles had been those of a Royalist; but as he emerged from the evil days of the Commonwealth with a fortune hardly, if at all, impaired, he must have conducted himself with singular discretion and moderation. The gratitude of the royal brothers was, however, not generally proportioned to the sacrifices which had been made in their cause. Richard Jennings was soon received into high favour at court, and his eldest daughter, Frances, became one of the maids of honour to the first Duchess of York, Anne Hyde. The bright complexion, animated features, fair hair, and lively manner of Frances Jennings set the breasts of half the cavaliers about Whitehall in a flame. But her numerous admirers soon discovered that, although ready to engage in any wild prank, she had her senses about her upon the most important of all matters to a young lady. An attempt was made upon her affections, or her ambition, by James, but was repulsed with a coolness and steadiness which in that dissolute court excited astonishment. The ogling of her royal lover failed even to bring a blush upon her countenance, while his letters were returned in an open manner which made him an object of ridicule. Charles himself was consulted by his brother upon this problem in the art of gallantry; and his sacred majesty pronounced that a girl who had never tasted anything more delicious than the plums and apricots of St. Albans, must have been very imperfectly attacked. According to the gay chronicler of the amusements at Whitehall, Charles at one time seriously contemplated bringing all his science to bear upon the heart of the maid of honour; but his lazy disposition shrank from the trouble it might occasion him. Frances Jennings eventually gave her hand to Sir George Hamilton, a Roman Catholic, and after his death married the handsome but vain and imprudent Talbot, whom James, after quitting the kingdom, advanced to be Duke of Tyrconnel.

Sarah, the younger sister of Frances, was, while still a child, brought frequently to court, and permitted to join in the diversions of Anne, who was about four years her junior. The Princess formed a strong attachment for her, and after the appointment of Sarah to be maid of honour to the second

Duchess of York, Anne of Modena, the two were constantly together. That difficulty, which usually interferes with the private friendships of royal personages, of inducing an inferior to throw off restraint, did not exist in the present case. Sarah Jennings, like her sister, was not endowed with any excessive veneration for her superiors in rank. She fell easily into the habit of conversing and corresponding with the Princess on terms of the most perfect equality. The imperious, passionate girl acquired indeed from the first a complete ascendant over the sluggish intellect but affectionate disposition of Anne. She behaved towards her after the same haughty, overbearing fashion in which she behaved towards her other friends, and rated the Princess soundly whenever she did anything to displease her. But the ill-temper and insolence of the favourite awoke no resentment in the gentle breast of Anne so long as she believed that her favourite really loved her. The better to forget the trammels of rank in the luxury of friendship, a correspondence began under fictitious names, which continued far into the reign of Anne. The Princess, perhaps from some tender remembrance of her mother's confessor, chose the name of Morley: Sarah adopted the very appropriate one of Freeman.

About the commencement of 1678, Sarah Jennings was privately married to Colonel John Churchill, who then held the office of Master of the Robes in the establishment of the Duke of York. It was a pure love-match, and that between two persons neither of whom, it might have been expected, would have married solely for love. Yet Sarah, ambitious as she undoubtedly was, is said, for Churchill's sake, to have rejected a marquis; while Churchill, who was thought to value nothing in the world but money, turned away, for a comparatively poor girl, from the attractions of an heiress. Indeed, the disapprobation with which the parents on both sides regarded the match compelled the pair to keep it secret for several months. Even in a worldly point of view, however, it proved most fortunate for both parties. Churchill held in the affections of James the same place which his wife occupied in the affections of Anne. He rose to the peerage, steered his course with consummate prudence through the dangers of the Revolution, was rewarded by William for the services he had rendered to his

cause with the title of Earl of Marlborough, and was then employed in situations which enabled him to display his great military talents. The Marlboroughs soon incurred the displeasure of William and Mary; nor was this strange. The King and Queen were childless: it was therefore almost certain that the crown would lapse to the Princess Anne. To her reign the Marlboroughs looked steadily for the further advancement of their fortunes. To earn her gratitude, they espoused every quarrel in which she became engaged with her royal relations, heedless of the resentment which such a line of conduct could not fail to provoke in the King and Queen. But towards the end of William's reign, his displeasure had apparently ceased. Marlborough was readmitted to favour, and indeed to a degree of the King's confidence hardly enjoyed by any other Englishman. The diplomatic relations in which he was brought with foreign powers in negotiating the Grand Alliance rendered him, in the eyes of foreigners, the first subject of our island. At home, his popularity was boundless. The English had watched his achievements with the fondest pride, eager on every occasion to extol their own countrymen above the military favourites of their Dutch sovereign—his Overkirks, Ginkels, and Zulesteins. As yet, Marlborough had had little opportunity of proving that those talents for war with which he was generally credited were not over-estimated; but the most experienced commanders of the Continent spoke of him in terms of high praise. In England he had neither rival nor second to his fame. His contemporaries knew but little of those less pleasing features of his character which recent discoveries have revealed. His ingratitude and perfidy towards his benefactor, James, were not regarded in the light in which they are regarded at the present day. It was considered that he had acted the part of a good Englishman in rescuing liberty and religion from the grasp of a tyrant. His contemporaries knew nothing of his perfidy to William; and they listened with good-humoured scepticism to the wild stories which were constantly circulating about his love of money, his secret hoards of treasure, and the wicked means by which he had amassed them.

In the mind of Anne, at the period of her accession, two

feelings were uppermost—her affection for the Marlboroughs, and her still stronger affection for the Church of England. It had been the good fortune of the Tory party to identify itself in her views with this latter sentiment. Anne was accustomed to call the Tories the Church party, and no arguments could shake her trust in their respectability and integrity.* Their rivals, the Whigs, she regarded with childish dread and horror. To thwart and insult their hereditary sovereign, to undermine the Church by encouraging dissent—such were the odious instincts of a Whig. It seemed to her that the ruler who could succeed in repressing a set of men so impious and mischievous must deserve a blessing from heaven. It was to the Tory party that the Marlboroughs had been hitherto considered as belonging; but a change had latterly been working in the mind of the Countess. She had contracted a great friendship for the Countess of Sunderland, the wife of that clever but unprincipled Whig who had played so prominent a part in the reign of James. The connection between the Marlboroughs and the Sunderlands had recently been drawn closer by a marriage between a daughter of the former and a son of the latter.† It should seem that the conversation of Lady Sunderland was the principal means of converting Lady Marlborough from a Tory into a Whig; and as opinions always went to extremes in her mind, she was soon a flaming partisan. Marlborough himself had never been more of a Tory than in name. His calm, self-relying genius held itself far aloof from the struggles and clamour of parties. It was his first object that the war should be declared, and that he should command the English forces. But it was necessary that he should be properly supported at home.

That the Tories would, as a party, throw themselves heartily into the war was hardly to be expected. A vehement prejudice against standing armies was their prominent characteristic, a prejudice almost tantamount to disapprobation of all wars of offence. Throughout the entire course of the last reign they

*Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough, 1742; Burnet's history of his own time.

† The marriage took place January, 1700, but it had been for some time in contemplation. Marlborough did not quite like the prospect of having a hot-headed Whig for a son-in-law.

had signalised their dislike of interfering in continental affairs. Every step taken by William had been scrutinised with malicious severity. They had done their best to depreciate even the services of the naval conqueror of La Hogue. The disapproval with which the leaders of the party, Rochester and Nottingham, regarded the design of a war with France, was notorious. Yet into such hands and at such a season did it seem probable that Anne would now commit the safety and honour of the nation. She had, in truth, two objects in view, the pursuit of which at the same time was no easy matter. The Marlboroughs had succeeded in persuading her of the necessity of the war. But she was supremely anxious also to secure the Church. The Tories would doubtless take all possible care of the Church; but it was likely that the war would languish under their superintendence. The best promoters of the war would unquestionably be the Whigs; but from entrusting such men with power the imagination of the pious queen recoiled. It had been always the leading wish of Marlborough to form an administration composed of the moderate men of both factions, in the hope that they would be strong enough when united to keep under the rancorous and extreme of both.* He could not now see without great regret, and his wife not without great wrath, that the new sovereign was evidently bent on dismissing all the Whigs from her counsels, and delivering herself up completely to the Tories.

It was under these circumstances that the new reign began. During the night that William continued in a dying state, hourly bulletins had been transmitted to the palace of St. James, where Anne was sitting up with her ladies. The demise of the crown was announced to her by the usual flock of greedy parasites, each member struggling to be first to wish her new Majesty joy.† The morning was singularly fair, and a bright sun shone upon a happy party of Tories. "What a fine day it is!" remarked Anne to the Marquis of Normanby. "The

* That such was Marlborough's desire is evident from numerous letters in Coxe's Memoirs of the Duke.

† I hope that Lord Dartmouth's statement that Burnet was the first person who rushed from the chamber of the dead king to prostrate himself, full of joy and duty, at the feet of the new queen, is a little coloured by malice. There can be no doubt that Burnet was much attached to William.

finest, madam, I ever saw in my life," was the reply of the exulting courtier. He was soon afterwards created Duke of Buckinghamshire.

By the time that the Privy Councillors of the late King had assembled at St. James's, Anne was prepared with a few sentences which had been framed for her with much judgment. She expressed her sense of the misfortune which had befallen the kingdom, and of the great burden which it had brought upon herself. Nothing, she said, could encourage her to undergo the weight of a crown but her concern for the preservation of the religion, the laws, and liberties of her country. These were as dear to her as they were to any person whatsoever; and she might be depended upon for sparing no pains to preserve them. She was anxious to maintain the succession in the Protestant line, and the government in Church and State established by law.

She then spoke a few decisive words upon that subject which was uppermost in the minds of her people. Upon this, the first occasion of her speaking to her Council, she said, she thought it proper to declare her own opinion of the importance of carrying on the preparations for opposing the great power of France. She would therefore lose no time in conveying to the allies of this country the assurance of her resolution to pursue the true interest of England together with theirs for the support of the common cause. To these ends she would be always ready to ask the advice of her Council and of both Houses of Parliament, and would show herself desirous of countenancing and employing all who should heartily concur with her in supporting the present establishment and constitution against all enemies.*

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer's Annals; Burnet's History. As these three are the most copious sources of information concerning this reign, it may be useful to say a word respecting them. Of the Lettres Historiques, I have availed myself largely. They purport to be a series of letters upon political events written each month from every part of civilised Europe to a bookseller at the Hague. In reality, however, from 1692 to 1710 they proceed from the pen of a M. Dumont, who was employed to reduce into shape and compass the matter furnished by newspapers, news-letters, or correspondents. As far as I have been able to test them, they are remarkably accurate in the statement of facts; and one considerable merit attaches to them. The bookseller announces at the outset his determination to hold himself perfectly impartial between all nations, sects, and political parties, and the promise is well kept. Boyer's Annals

These promises, delivered by Anne in that clear sweet voice which was her best regal qualification,* gave unmingled satisfaction to her audience. In the course of the afternoon, her accession to the crown was proclaimed before the gate of St. James's, and the form was repeated, according to custom, at Charing Cross, Temple Bar, and the Royal Exchange. In every quarter the heralds were received with acclamations. Not a single attempt by the partisans of the Prince of Wales to create a disturbance seems to have occurred.†

Upon the following day both Houses of Parliament waited upon the Queen with loyal addresses. The Commons, after intimating their opinion that nothing could be more conducive to the honour and safety of her Majesty and her kingdom than to maintain inviolate such alliances as had been or should be made for preserving the liberties of Europe and reducing the exorbitant power of France, declared the firm resolution of their House to enable the Queen to prosecute that glorious design. It was their intention to maintain the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, and effectually to provide for the public credit of the nation.‡

The customary addresses of condolence and congratulation now poured in upon the Queen from all parts of the country.§ Their only variety in substance lay in the method of mentioning the departed sovereign, whose merits by some Whig corporations were extolled in a manner which could scarcely have been gratifying to Anne. There can be no doubt that her accession was regarded as an agreeable event by the great body of the nation. The Whigs naturally regretted the hostility with which their new sovereign was disposed to regard them;

supply a large amount of information; but it must be borne in mind that the writer was a zealous Whig. The same remark may be made of Burnet's History. The author was a strong partisan, and not fond of telling anything that might redound to the discredit of the Whigs or the praise of the Tories. But he was himself an actor in many of the scenes he records, had constant access to Anne, and was intimately acquainted with most of the statesmen of the period.

* The sweetness of Anne's voice, and her excellent delivery, are noticed by Burnet and confirmed by Dartmouth and Speaker Onslow in their notes upon his history. She had received lessons in elocution from Mrs. Barry, the celebrated actress in the time of Charles II.

† Lettres Historiques.

‡ Cobbett's Parliamentary History.

§ Several specimens are given in the *London Gazette*.

but the Whigs, although comprising nearly all the intelligence of the country, were but a small minority of the population. A few Roman Catholics, zealous for religion or scrupulous about hereditary right, may have mourned in secret over the exclusion of the Prince of Wales. But the Roman Catholics were not very numerous or influential, and very few persons could have been so blinded by religious or political bigotry as not to perceive that, unless a total change came over the sentiments of the mass of the people, no Catholic sovereign could possibly attain the throne without having first achieved, by the aid of foreign arms, a conquest over the national liberties. Anne had, moreover, an advantage, similar to that which had been enjoyed by her uncle, Charles II. She succeeded a ruler who, with all his talents for government, had never entirely won the affections of those he governed. The only tie which had bound the English to William had been that of self-interest. He was popular only at those critical times when the nation felt his abilities and energy to be indispensable to its security. At his first appearance the English had worked up their feelings into something like enthusiasm for the Protestant prince who had so manfully come forward to assist them in preserving their liberty and religion from a tyrant. In the last year of his life they had again become fervently loyal under a sense of their need of an earnest and spirited leader against France. But between these two periods of devotion eleven years of coolness had intervened. It must be always a work of difficulty for a prince to obtain popularity without possessing the fascinations of hereditary right. He has to contend against feelings as widely spread and as deeply rooted in the hearts of his people as their feelings upon the score of religion. Not a day passes without the remembrance is brought home to him that he is, after all, but an usurper, and reigns only by sufferance. All the affected humility and patience of Cromwell, the energy with which he kept order at home and made his country respected abroad, could never obtain for him one particle of that normal affection which the English continued to cherish for a family which during two generations had done nothing but injure, oppress, and degrade them. But William scarcely made an attempt to conciliate the affections of the people he

undertook to govern. The whole course of his conduct shows how little he loved his English subjects or cared to understand them. He outraged both their pride and their sense of justice by his partiality to Dutch favourites, and he shocked their religious prejudices by the licence he permitted to those who dissented from the national establishment. By the close of his reign, the opinion had become firmly rooted in the bulk of the population that the Church was in as much danger of being undermined by the Dissenters as it had ever been of being subverted by the Papists.

Three days after her accession Anne repaired in state to the House of Lords, sent for the Commons, and made her first speech from the throne. She reiterated the promises she had made in her speech to the Privy Council.* "As," she concluded, "I know my own heart to be entirely English, I can very sincerely assure you there is not anything you can expect of me which I shall not be ready to do for the happiness and prosperity of England, and you shall always find me a strict and religious observer of my word." These words, gracious as they seemed, contained matter expressly calculated to give offence to the Whigs, and may be regarded as the first of a series of covert taunts placed in the mouth of the Queen by the party which had got possession of her. The emphatic statement that her heart was "entirely English" could be intended as nothing but a reflection on the late King. Those words were, with exceedingly bad taste, reproduced in a medal struck at the coronation.

The speech, however, which was as warlike and menacing to France as the most ardent Whig could desire, gave very general satisfaction. That feeling was still increased by some announcements which shortly afterwards appeared in the *London Gazette*. The public was apprised that the Earl of Marlborough had been honoured with the Order of the Garter, that he had been appointed Captain-General of all her Majesty's forces in England, or which were to be employed abroad in conjunction with the troops of the Allies, and that he had been despatched as ambassador-extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the States-general.

* Parliamentary History; Burnet's remarks on the speech.

The intelligence of William's death had reached the Hague four days after the event occurred, and had spread consternation through the Dutch Republic. If the transference of the sceptre at such a time could excite anxiety among the citizens of London, whose persons and property were at all events tolerably safe from the power of the French king, it may be judged how terrible was the alarm of a people whose independence and religion now appeared to lie almost at his mercy. Upon the active support of England in the war which was on the eve of commencing they had reckoned implicitly. But was it possible that England, under the government of a female, a stranger to their blood, could be to them the generous and cordial ally which England must have been under their own beloved stadtholder? The same messenger who brought the sad news of William's death brought also a report of the Queen's speech to her Privy Council. But even the reassuring promises it contained failed to calm the public agitation. Speeches were made and resolutions passed in the separate States of the Provinces, breathing the high-wrought feelings of the Dutch in this crisis. The States of Holland, headed by their president, Fagel, and the States of West Friesland repaired in a body to the States-general. Without the most entire concord and harmony between the several States they represented, the Republic would be lost. It was incumbent on every citizen at this conjuncture to form a determination to defend his country, not doubting but that it was better to sacrifice property, life, everything, than that the Republic, and with it liberty and religion, should fall. A message was delivered to the States-general from the city of Amsterdam. It was an offer to advance money to such of the provinces as should need it for their defence and for furnishing their quota of troops to the national army. On the day which followed this day of terror a letter was received from the Queen which quieted to some extent the general apprehension. Anne declared that, although she had succeeded William on the throne, she had succeeded likewise to those feelings with which he regarded the United Provinces. It was her intention to maintain all the alliances which had been concluded with the States. The interests of England, she said, and the interests of the Republic

were in her eyes inseparable. The two nations were connected by ties which could not be severed except to the prejudice of both.*

On the 17th (Old Style) Marlborough, who had been anxiously expected, arrived at the Hague. Three days afterwards he received his formal audience from the States-general, and renewed those promises of the strictest friendship which Anne had made by letter. When he had concluded his speech, Dykvelt, the president for the week, rose and requested the ambassador to convey the hearty thanks of the assembly to her Majesty for these gracious assurances. The person of his excellency, Dykvelt added, was doubly acceptable to the States, not only on account of his own merits and his being the choice of the Queen, but because he had been formerly invested by King William with the character in which he now appeared. At the mention of that beloved name the aged president was overcome with emotion, and tears rolled down his cheeks.†

After Marlborough had taken his leave the States proceeded to the consideration of a memorial which had just been presented by a French envoy, named the Sieur de Barré. This document affords an interesting illustration of the ignorance of Louis with respect to every other court and people but his own. William, it seems, he regarded as the sole opponent of his schemes of ambition and aggression. What opinions the people of England or of Holland might hold about his conduct were beneath his consideration. His lofty views of the royal character, in truth, prevented him from realising any but the most hazy conception of a constitutional sovereign. If William decided upon war, to war his English and Dutch subjects were bound to follow. That a king should frequently be debarred from acting as he thought fit by the resistance of his subjects, that when he judged a war to be expedient he should be compelled to remain at peace, or that with all his inclinations on the side of peace he should be forced by public opinion to embark in a war, were conditions of royalty unintelligible to Louis. This

* Mémoires de Lamberty; Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Burnet. In many of the Dutch towns the bells tolled for an hour and a half each day during six days from the death of William. One unlucky madman, who passed some contemptuous remarks upon the King at Amsterdam, was killed by the populace.

† Lamberty; Tindal; Lettres Historiques.

opposition to him which had recently been marshalling he considered not as the work of the people, but of William personally. When such were the notions entertained at the Court of France regarding the power and the influence of the English sovereign, it may be judged with what joy the news of his death was received. It was absolutely necessary for Louis to issue express orders for checking any indecent manifestations of delight. For several days the King flattered himself that the Grand Alliance was dissolved, and that he should hear of no more threats from the side of England. Holland, with her great supporter withdrawn, it would be no difficult work to pacify. A timely flourish of his power would bring the Dutch to their senses, and set at rest the spirit of opposition.*

In such ignorance of the true state of circumstances, it seems, was framed the present memorial to the States-general. His Majesty, it stated, had hitherto borne with his many causes of complaint against the States from a conviction that they were not their own masters. But now that the Republic was restored to itself, he could not doubt but a more proper spirit would prevail, and that it would be perceived that the best safeguard of the Republic lay in the maintenance of a good understanding with France. It rested with the States whether they preferred repose and liberty, or to see their commerce sacrificed in a cause totally foreign to them. Should they be, however, so misguided as to desire war, his Majesty was perfectly prepared to commence it.

Insolent and ill-advised as was this document, Barré nevertheless judged that its arguments were so well calculated to abate the ardour of the Dutch for war, that he had it printed and circulated. Its perusal, as any one but a Frenchman might have expected, excited great indignation. In a short time appeared the answer of the States-general. It repelled with proper contempt the insinuations which had been made regarding the tyranny of William. The Sieur, it said, would not have fallen into such a mistake had he been better acquainted with the constitution of the Republic. Their high mighti-

* Lamberty; Lettres Historiques (article France); St. Simon. Burnet has some anecdotes about the joy manifested at Paris and Rome upon the death of William.

nesses enjoyed the same liberty in the King's lifetime which they enjoyed now of debating and of passing such measures as they judged expedient. They were convinced that his late Majesty's counsels had been directed entirely to the preservation of their liberty and religion, and they were therefore determined not to recede from any of the alliances he had contracted.*

The task of drawing up this answer had devolved, as a part of his regular duties, upon a statesman who was destined to exercise very considerable influence over the events of succeeding years. This was Anthony Heinsius, Grand Pensionary of Holland. In France at least he was regarded, although not with entire justice, as one of the most resolute and uncompromising opponents of the King in all Europe. The enmity was even traced to a fancied origin. In 1678 Heinsius had been sent to Paris for the purpose of settling some matters with Louvois about the principality of Orange. High words arose between the haughty minister and the sturdy republican; and Louvois, forgetting in his passion that the envoy was a very different person from one of those subaltern officers who were accustomed to quail before him, threatened him with the Bastille. The Dutchman, it was said, never forgot the threat. From that moment the Government of France became in his eyes the embodiment of tyranny, pride, and violence. He returned home with a fixed resolve to oppose it by every means in his power. William, it is certain, reposed in Heinsius the most entire confidence. By his influence the latter was elected to the post of Grand Pensionary, and was thereby enabled to render great services to his chief. Custom and convenience had devolved upon the first magistrate of Holland, who resided permanently at the Hague, most of those duties which in monarchies devolve upon the ministers. It fell to his station to have the first perusal of those despatches which were addressed to the States-general, and to receive the first visit of ambassadors. His temperament was cold and phlegmatic. The gentleness of his demeanour often deceived diplomatists into an opinion that they had made a convert of the Pensionary; but his judgment was singularly clear and sound, and his integrity

* Lamberty; Lettres Historiques (article Hollande).

unquestionable. His manner of living was formed on the severe republican model. Torcy, accustomed to a retinue of running footmen in rich liveries, could hardly credit his senses when, in 1709, he made the discovery that the establishment of the first man in the victorious and wealthy Republic consisted of no more than a secretary, a coachman, a man-servant, and an old woman.*

Marlborough's stay at the Hague did not much exceed a fortnight, but the harmony prevailing upon essential points rendered that period long enough to fix the day for declaring war, and to settle the plan of the first campaign. It was agreed with the imperial minister that the declarations against France and Spain should be issued simultaneously at London, the Hague, and Vienna. The day appointed was the 4th of May (Old Style). Part of the Dutch troops began to march while Marlborough was still at the Hague. It was the intention of the Prince of Nassau-Saarbruck to besiege Kaiserswerth on the Rhine as soon as the weather permitted, without waiting for war to be declared.†

The Commons had meanwhile decided to settle upon Anne, for her civil list, the same revenue of six hundred thousand pounds a year which had been enjoyed by William. Several Whig members thought this sum too large, and that a difference might properly be made between a female sovereign and an active prince, who was accustomed to take the field in person. The savings would probably be large, and there was no security that they might not be applied to purposes prejudicial to the commonwealth. But the leaders of the party, who were already in some dread of Anne, judged it expedient not to inflame her by any open expression of their opinion. The Queen on her side was generously disposed. She gave her warm thanks to the Commons for the liberal revenue they had voted to her. While her subjects, however, she said, laboured under so great a burden of taxes, she would rather straiten herself in her own expenses than fail of contributing to their relief. She would

* There are notices of Heinsius scattered through the various biographies of Marlborough, and in the Correspondance Diplomatique et Militaire du Duc de M. et du Grand Pensionnaire; Mémoires de Torcy.

† Lamberty; Lettres Historiques. Marlborough tried hard to get the Swedish troops into the pay of the allies.

therefore give orders for applying a hundred thousand pounds from her revenue to the service of the year.*

The oath imposed by the Act of Abjuration was, to the surprise and disappointment of the Whigs, taken freely by the Tories, and even by many persons who were reputed to be Jacobites. The failure of this measure, which the Whigs had fondly hoped would be the means of ridding them of a large proportion of their rivals, was accounted for by a story that the Prince of Wales had despatched an emissary into this country to request his partisans not to throw up positions in which they might do him good service, through mere squeamishness of conscience. A document setting forth reasons for accepting the oath was handed about among the Tories. By the term "rightful sovereign," it was contended, was to be understood the sovereign whose right was declared by law. A good Churchman might swear allegiance to Anne in that sense without implying any admission of her divine right.† It is, probable, however, that selfish considerations were not without their effect in recommending this argument to the consciences of the Tories. The bias of the sovereign had been already shown so openly as to leave no doubt as to which would henceforth be the favoured party. To quit the field when fortune had turned the battle in their favour, and to abandon the fruits of the hardly-won victory to their opponents, was a sacrifice demanding a strength of purpose far above ordinary minds.

During the months of March, April, and May, the royal household and an administration were in course of formation. Every Whig in high station was dismissed. Lord Wharton gave place, as Comptroller of the Palace, to the rancorous and unprincipled Tory, Sir Edward Seymour.‡ Lord Edward Russell was succeeded, as Treasurer of the Chambers, by Lord Fitzhardinge. The Marquis of Normanby, one of the few English noblemen whose inclinations certainly were in favour

* Parliamentary History; Burnet. This revenue for the home government, as will afterwards be seen, proved inadequate.

† Burnet; but I cannot find in the Macpherson papers any record of an express messenger on the subject.

‡ Cunninghame (History of Great Britain) says that Anne took Wharton's staff and handed it to Seymour before his face. The three other great officers of the late king, the Duke of Devonshire and the Earls of Jersey and Bradford, were permitted to retain their places.

of restoring the exiled family, was made Privy Seal. The Earl of Pembroke was dismissed from the post of Lord High Admiral, which Anne reserved for Prince George. The total unfitness of his Royal Highness to perform the duties of this or any other trust requiring abilities and experience, rendered necessary the appointment of a council by whom the duties should in reality be performed. Conjugal fondness had already prompted Anne to invest the prince with a character which threatened some danger to the public interest. She had made him supreme commander of all her forces by land and sea, with the title of generalissimo. Nor was it at first her intention that this appointment should be a sinecure. It had been a part of Marlborough's instructions to urge the States-general to place the prince at the head of the Dutch army; and for more than a month Anne appears to have looked forward to the military triumphs of her husband as leader of the combined troops of England and Holland.* Two Whigs, Manchester and Vernon, were turned out of the secretaryships to make room for two Tories, the Earl of Nottingham and Sir Charles Hedges. Rochester coveted for himself the post of High Treasurer; but to his mortification this was denied to him, and he derived no further advantage from the close relationship in which he stood to the sovereign than that of being confirmed in his dignity of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.† It seems that the entreaties of Marlborough had been successful in excluding from any interference with the finances a nobleman who was known to regard the war as unnecessary, and whom Marlborough rightly suspected of cherishing no very friendly feeling towards himself. The post of Treasurer was allotted to Lord Godolphin, upon whose fidelity and skill in business Marlborough knew that he could implicitly depend. The very important part filled by this nobleman in one of the most eventful periods of English history, has invested him with an interest which neither his abilities nor his character would, under ordinary circumstances, have created. It was his fortune to link his name inseparably with that of one of our most famous soldiers, and to have been largely instrumental in the achievement of those victories to

* Lamberty; Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough.

† So Burnet says. Godolphin was not appointed Treasurer till the 6th of May.

which Englishmen still point as evidence of their genius for war. It may therefore be desirable to attempt some delineation of his mind and person.

He was now an old man past his seventieth year, the descendant of a family of high antiquity but moderate fortune in Cornwall. The whole of his life from his fifteenth year had been passed at Court, where his modest, unassuming manners, his strict attention to his duties, and his thorough trustworthiness had made him a favourite with three successive monarchs of widely different character. "Sidney Godolphin," said Charles II., "is never in the way and never out of the way." His rise in the royal household was nevertheless but slow. It was not until after the accession of James that he was appointed Lord Chamberlain to the Queen. He had before this time, however, merited and achieved success in another path of life. Ever since the Restoration he had sat in the House of Commons. Of oratorical talents he was utterly destitute. Except when forced by the extreme pressure of the occasion, he never opened his mouth in Parliament; and the few speeches he delivered during the eight years he remained at the head of the administration appear to have been nothing more than the brief and unadorned expression of his opinion. But the discovery was gradually made that the silent member for Helston had, by dint of application, rendered himself a consummate master of some necessary branches in the art of government which such statesmen as Shrewsbury or Rochester disdained to go through the drudgery of acquiring. In all questions relating to finance or trade the opinion of Godolphin carried the same weight as the opinions of Nottingham and Robert Harley on points of parliamentary procedure; and he seems to have inspired the ministers of Charles with the same kind of respect which a country magistrate cannot avoid feeling for the clerk who every day preserves him from exposing his ignorance of law, and falling into ridiculous and dangerous blunders. In 1679 he was promoted to the House of Lords, and to a seat in the Privy Council; and his preferment was the more honourable to him as it was earned without the smallest sycophancy or sacrifice of conscience on his part, and bestowed without any foolish degree of fondness on the part of

the sovereign. It is, indeed, a remarkable testimony to the extreme usefulness of Godolphin that Charles and James overlooked his voting for the Exclusion Bill, and that William overlooked his voting for a regency.*

During the reign of William he was entrusted with the principal direction of the finances as often as the Tories were in the ascendant, and was on two occasions appointed one of the Lords Justices who governed in the King's absence. To the Tory party Godolphin professed to belong; but his temperament was kindred to that of Marlborough. He loved quiet, and detested the useless din and strife of political parties. The friendship subsisting between Godolphin and Marlborough was probably of old date; but the bonds were drawn closer in 1698 by a marriage between the only son of the former and the eldest daughter of the latter. Godolphin seems to have shrunk with many misgivings from entering the ministry in conjunction with such embittered colleagues as Rochester and Nottingham. But Marlborough's influence over him was considerable; and Marlborough no doubt represented that his efforts abroad at the head of the armies would be rendered futile, unless some one had the control of the finances at home upon whose co-operation with himself and punctuality in making remittances he could absolutely depend.

For Godolphin it would seem that Anne entertained no very high regard.† There was, indeed, little in his face or behaviour to win favour in the sight of most ladies. His heavy immovable looks had earned for him the nickname of "Baconface." Notwithstanding a life passed entirely about the persons of sovereigns, his manners remained unpolished: when he spoke he betrayed his bashfulness and timidity; and the pursuits with which he amused his leisure were those of a clown rather than of a gentleman. Horse-racing, cock-fighting, drinking,‡ and card-playing were his favourite diversions. The fine arts, literature, and literary men he neglected in a manner which distinguished him with much unhappy prominence in an age abounding with munificent patrons, themselves not inferior in

* Burnet; Tindal.

† Swift, in several of his political writings.

‡ "And wine cheers up Godolphin's cloudy face."—Toland's invitation to Dismal, Swift's political poetry.

wit, learning, and accomplishments to the poets they befriended, Dorset, Shrewsbury, Somers, Halifax, Burnet, and Bolingbroke. His best claims to consideration—his incorruptible integrity, a quality singularly remarkable in this unscrupulous generation, his unrivalled acquaintance with that science which is now termed political economy, and his cool, calm judgment—were appreciated at their just value in the City, but had little chance of being understood by a sovereign like Anne. For her it was probably sufficient that she supposed Godolphin to be a Tory, although it might be a lukewarm one, and that the Marlboroughs declared that his appointment as Treasurer was indispensable.

The Privy Council was remodelled. The names of Somers, Halifax, Orford, and of several other eminent Whigs, were struck out of the list of members. Their places were supplied by those Tories who had made themselves conspicuous in the previous reign by their opposition to William and his Whig Ministers. Among them were Simon Harcourt and John Howe.

The fame of Harcourt both as a lawyer and an orator stood deservedly high. For eleven years his eloquence had been exerted, though too often in vain, against those tyrannical measures with which the Whigs abused the season of their power. The consequence was that the rival faction set him down as an undoubted Jacobite. It is a task of no little difficulty to the historian of this reign to determine what persons were or were not entitled to this appellation. If it be applicable to all those who asserted the doctrine of hereditary right, then every Tory was a Jacobite. The doctrine had in point of fact become entangled in the minds of most Englishmen with notions of religious duty. Yet the unopposed succession of Anne, and subsequently of George, preclude all doubt that the Tories, at least as a body, entertained any thoughts of carrying their doctrine into practice. The truth seems to be that the violent and arbitrary manner in which the Whigs asserted the Revolutionary dogmas provoked a resistance from the Tories which would not otherwise have been shown. Against the party cry of "the Protestant succession," were set up the cries of "non-resistance" and "hereditary right," without the sup-

porters attaching any real meaning to the words. Some of the more eminent Tories received visits from the emissaries of James, and despatched through this channel friendly messages to the exiled sovereign; and among these Tories may have been Harcourt.* But this line of action was probably pursued only as a provision against any turn of fortune which should restore James to the throne. There is not, as far as is known, an atom of evidence to show that Harcourt rendered any assistance to his hereditary sovereign, or that he even wished to see a Roman Catholic prince again bear sway in England. His politics had been hitherto in the way of his promotion; but it was now thought likely that he would have been passed over the inferior degrees of preferment directly to the woolsack. The great seal was held by Sir Nathan Wright, with the title of Lord Keeper. The legal acquirements of this man were below the requisite standard, and his character for meanness and avarice ill-qualified him to preside over the most august assembly in the kingdom. Some surprise was therefore occasioned when Wright was confirmed in his dignity, and Harcourt received only the office of Solicitor-General.

Howe, the most rancorous and insolent of all the opponents of William, was made one of the paymasters-general of the forces. It was remembered that Jack had often declared that no place should ever tempt him to desert the country party. He excused himself by saying that he had after all accepted but half a place, as the office was divided between him and another. From this moment, however, the denunciations of the patriot ceased to be heard in Parliament.†

Alterations so extensive in the constitution of the royal household, the administration, and the Privy Council should have satisfied any reasonable Tory. Yet Rochester and zealots like him still grumbled. They were for turning out every Whig in office, lieutenants of counties, magistrates of the peace, clerks in the public departments. Anne was perhaps restrained from pursuing further a scheme so entirely in accordance with

* Lord Campbell (Lives of the Chancellors) assumes, as a matter of course, that Harcourt was in favour of restoring the Pretender, and Lord Mahon (History of England) regards him as wavering or uncertain. But beyond the asseverations of the Whigs, the evidence against him is very slight.

† Howe is a prominent character in Macaulay's history.

her notions as to her duty by that Church of which she was now the head by a wholesome fear of incurring the wrath of Lady Marlborough.* Already the favour she had shown to the enemies of William had produced its natural fruit. A crowd of execrable poets and starving pamphleteers was struggling to attract her regard by pouring abuse upon her predecessor. Sarcastic epigrams upon the late king circulated freely in the coffee-houses. A copy of Latin verses, addressed to the horse that threw William, assured that unlucky animal of a place in the skies above the constellations of Leo, Taurus, and Ursa; and the poet inquired whether Ireland or Glencoe had the honour of being its birthplace, or whether it sprang from the avenging blood of Sir John Fenwick.† One absurd story had circulated so extensively as to induce the Whig peers to give it formal contradiction in Parliament. It was said that William, out of revenge for the trouble occasioned him by Anne, had prepared a scheme for excluding her from the throne. An insurrection was to be excited in Scotland or Ireland, and under the pretence of quelling it, the Elector of Hanover was to be invited over with an army. As soon as he was in England, there was to be a change of the lieutenants of counties, a new Parliament was to be summoned, and every engine set in motion to influence the country to choose such members as would agree to anything the King might propose. Papers containing the fullest particulars of this horrid design, it was gravely added, would be found in his Majesty's strong box. It is remarkable that this silly tale appears to have imposed upon some persons occupying stations of trust and authority. The Mayor and Corporation of Norwich thought proper in their address to Anne to congratulate her upon her peaceable succession, "notwithstanding all the malicious designs and contrivances used to defeat her undoubted right." ‡

The existence of a Whig conspiracy to exclude the Queen from the throne was insinuated in at least two publications which had recently appeared. Grub Street was clearly of opinion that libels on the late administration would pay, and that the present Ministers might be depended upon to shield

* Conduct of the Duchess; Burnet.
† Printed in Boyer's Annals. ‡ Burnet.

their friends from the consequences. The first book which excited the ire of the Whigs was a "History of the Last Parliament of the Reign of King William." The author was a poor physician named Drake, who chose to neglect a profession in which his real abilities and acquirements ought to have secured him an honourable livelihood, in order to curry favour with Normanby. The publisher was summoned to the bar of the Lords. Drake, however, was sufficiently honest or sufficiently confident of the result to surrender himself as the author. He was questioned about his grounds for the insinuations he had made in the preface to his "History," and answered, no doubt with truth, that his grounds were no better than rumours which he had picked up in coffee-houses, or collected from other pamphlets. The House, after a short discussion, resolved that there were several false and scandalous expressions in the book tending to create jealousies and misunderstandings between the Queen and her subjects, and ordered the Attorney-General to prosecute Drake. In another venomous publication written in the form of a dialogue between two characters named Whiglove and Double, a system of bribery and peculation was imputed to the late administration which Turkish pachas would scarcely have ventured to carry into practice. The House passed the same censure upon this work as upon Drake's: but the publisher had been prudent enough to avoid attaching his name, and neither he nor the author could be discovered. A sermon preached on the 13th of January before Convocation, by Doctor Binks, was safely left by the Whigs to ecclesiastical censure. The doctor was so outrageous a Tory as to protest that the sin of the Jews in crucifying our Saviour was more pardonable than the sin of the English rebels who beheaded Charles, inasmuch as Christ, although entitled to the dignity of King of the Jews, was not actually, as Charles was, in possession of the crown.*

In Parliament, the Tories made no effort to screen their partisans. But it was soon evident that the silent protection of the Court would be exerted in favour of scribblers whose only crime was to have been somewhat too zealous in abusing the

* Parliamentary History. Tom Double was ascribed to Sir Christopher Musgrave, a Tory leader.

hostile faction. Drake was prosecuted in the Queen's Bench: but the charge was not warmly pressed, and he was acquitted; not perhaps to his real advantage, as it encouraged him to pursue his vile and dangerous trade. Another individual, an old and notorious offender, whose ill fate it was to be on the wrong side in politics, was treated very differently. This was William Fuller, the liar, cheat, and informer. Since 1692, when the Parliament had treated him as an impostor, and the public had hooted him in the pillory, he had been little heard of, except for ordinary swindling. Towards the end of the century he had grown weary of a life of such obscurity. The Whigs were still in the ascendant, and he determined to render them a service which gentlemen attached to the Protestant succession could not fail to appreciate and reward liberally. This was to prove that the Prince of Wales was a supposititious child.*

He began by publishing his "Plain Proof," which, not attracting sufficient notice, he followed up by two other books, one entitled "Original Letters from the late King James," and the other, "Twenty-six Depositions from Persons of Quality." Forgeries so audacious as these the Parliament could not suffer to pass unchallenged. Fuller was summoned to the bar of the Lords, and ordered to produce vouchers for the authenticity of what he had written. The person, he said, who held the originals of the letters and depositions, and who had permitted him to take copies, went by the name of Jones. Jones, however, Fuller declared himself unable to produce; and he was then ordered into custody. What the result might have been had William continued much longer on the throne may be matter of doubt. But the evil star of the impostor was in the ascendant. Scarcely had he been two months in prison when a Tory sovereign and a Tory ministry succeeded to power. From them the unlucky culprit could expect no mercy. In June he was brought up for trial at the Court of Queen's Bench, and was convicted of having published a false and malicious libel. The sentence upon him was, that he should pass through every court in Westminster with a paper declaring his offence pinned to his hat, that he should stand thrice in

* Several lives of William Fuller, "the great English cheat," one of them by himself; his different publications; Parliamentary History.

the pillory, and that he should then be taken back to prison and receive a whipping. In prison he was to remain employed at hard labour until he had paid the fine, impossible for the poor rogue, of a thousand marks.

Upon the first day of Fuller's appearing in the pillory at Charing Cross, the crowd had either not gathered in sufficient force, or was kept in too much restraint by the officials, to do more than salute him with a little dirt and a few rotten eggs. But when, on the following day, he was stood up at Temple Bar, a Tory mob had collected, and stones and filth were thrown at him in such quantities that he narrowly escaped with life. The wretched man wrote to the Lord Mayor entreating his protection; and his petition availed so far that, upon his appearance in the pillory before the Royal Exchange, he was handled more mercifully by the populace. Weak with the torments he had undergone on three successive days, he was reconducted to prison, received a pitiless whipping, and was, with the blood still streaming from his shoulders, set to hard work. During the long period he remained in Newgate, he made an attempt to excite sympathy by writing an account of his life. A very bad man, a forger, a swindler, and a false witness, he very fairly owned himself to be. But he maintained that he had redeeming points. He had been always a good Englishman, zealous for the public service, and his attachment to the Church of England had never swerved. His misfortune was to have been constantly the dupe of cunning associates, who, after deluding him into executing their business, always decamped and left him in the lurch when his dependence upon their promises had brought him into trouble.*

Marlborough had meanwhile returned home, and had been in time to assist at two ceremonies. On the 12th of April, William, the most earnest and public-spirited, though unhappily not the most popular of our sovereigns, was borne to a tomb in Westminster Abbey. Eleven days after that event, the coronation of the Queen took place in the same edifice. Lady Marlborough had been loaded with favours. She had been appointed Groom of the Stole, Mistress of the Robes, Keeper of the Privy Purse, and Ranger, for life, of Windsor

* Fuller's Confessions, Boyer.

Park. The value of these posts amounted together to £7,500 a year.* Yet Anne still thought that she had not done enough for her favourite. The crown, she justly complained, had been so impoverished by the acts of her predecessors as to put it out of her power to provide for her friends as she could wish. Would Lady Marlborough, therefore, condescend to accept two thousand a year from the Privy Purse? The Countess thought it prudent for the present to decline this tempting offer. The income which she and her husband were already deriving from the liberality of the Queen was so large as to excite attention. But the offer was not forgotten by the lady. Nine years afterwards, when the rich mine of the royal affection had become exhausted, she thought proper to remind her mistress of it; and the scrupulous Anne allowed the mean and greedy creature to deduct from the Privy Purse accounts the whole arrears of the pension, amounting to £18,000.†

In the Privy Council some opposition was, even at this stage of preparation, made to issuing the declaration of war. Rochester was the principal dissentient from the opinion of the majority of the members. His dislike to a war which had been planned by William, and which was to be conducted by his rival Marlborough, casts some suspicion upon the integrity of his motives. He used, however, the same arguments which were afterwards employed by Swift in his animadversions upon the conduct of the war. It was not necessary that England should act as a principal in the contest with France. The Empire and Holland might be nearly concerned in checking the aggressive policy of the King. But neither the security nor the commerce of England were immediately threatened. It would be sufficient, therefore, if this country confined its action to sending its quota of forces to the Dutch, and to distributing pecuniary assistance, as it should be required, among the Allies.‡

To this reasoning Marlborough replied that there was no longer a way by which the Queen could recede with honour

* A review of a late treatise, entitled An Account of the Conduct, &c.; a short computation of the annual income of a certain great man, and of his lady, written in 1704.

† Conduct of the Duchess.

‡ Boyer. The principal opponents of the war seem to have been Rochester and Nottingham; its supporters, Marlborough, Somerset, and Pembroke.

from the engagements contracted by his late Majesty. Nor was it true that England was less concerned in this contest than the other Powers. The ambitious spirit which had been evinced by the French king threatened this country as much as it threatened any other State in Europe; and unless England accepted a leading part in the war, it might safely be predicted that the efforts of the Emperor and of the Dutch would avail nothing.

The student of this reign will probably consider this last argument unassailable. It may be an open question whether, under the circumstances, it was wise that England should embark in the war at all; whether it would not have been as safe, as certainly it would have been much cheaper, for her to entrust to time and to differences of race and religion the work of readjusting the balance of power in Europe; whether, in short, the Continent would not have set itself to rights without her interference. But, assuming that her interests were sufficiently involved to make a war expedient, it was surely best that she should throw into it her whole strength and energy. To have doled out to such inferior Powers as Holland and the Empire assistance in the form recommended by Rochester could have resulted in nothing but useless bloodshed and waste of money.

The Council, however, prudently determined to assure itself of the sanction of Parliament in this momentous question. The Convention, which had been recently signed at the Hague, between the three Powers for declaring war, was laid before the Commons. An address was at once carried unanimously thanking her Majesty for this communication, and assuring her of the support of the House.*

On the same day, a motion was made by a few zealots for the Church, which shows the meanness and littleness to which men can condescend when under the influence of bigotry and party feeling. It was moved that an address should be presented to the sovereign that no person should serve as an officer in the army who was not a native of England, Scotland, or Ireland, or born of British parents. The purpose was to exclude French

* The addresses of both Houses on this subject are given in the Parliamentary History.

Protestant gentlemen, many of whom held commissions. The only objection which it was possible to make to this class was that, although Protestants, and Protestants so sincere that they had sacrificed their homes and their country to their religion, they were not members of the Church of England, and were consequently Dissenters. Happily for the credit of the House, they did not want defenders. One old colonel stood up and protested that the French officers in his regiment were as brave, as thoroughly to be relied on, and as able to keep their companies in good order as any English officer he knew. "A fine reflection it will be upon this country," remarked the Marquis of Hartington, "if she turns away gentlemen who upon so many occasions have ventured their lives in her defence." Another member wished to know whether it was the desire of the promoters of the motion to dismiss the Duke of Schomberg, upon whose father the House had bestowed £100,000 for his services, and to dismiss Prince George, who had just been appointed generalissimo.*

The motion was dropped. But enough had been said to serve as a warning to the Dissenters of what they had to expect in this reign. During a few days succeeding the death of William, the unfortunate schismatics had been in consternation at the joy which they saw, or imagined they detected, in the countenances of their innumerable enemies. The indulgence with which they had, during the eleven years of their protector's sway, been treated, had rendered them, if possible, more odious than ever to the main body of their countrymen. The progress of Dissent and the sinfulness of the Toleration Act had been the constant theme of the Established Clergy. One of the earliest bodies to send in their congratulations to the Queen had been the Dissenting ministers in and around London; and Anne had graciously assured them of her protection. In some parts of England, however, it seems to have been inferred from Anne's known devotion to the Church that she would connive at any violence done on the enemies of the Church. At Newcastle-under-Lyne, a borough in which a high Tory, Sir John Gower, possessed the leading influence, the citizens rose and pulled down the meeting-houses; and in view of the state

* Boyer.

of excitement to which public feeling had been wrought by the invectives of the clergy, it seems strange that the example was not generally followed. It is an unhappy inconsistency in the human mind that the same qualities of courage and endurance which make us respect an enemy in war, only make us hate the more one who differs from us in religion. It will be conceded that the man who presumes to differ with the mob on questions of ecclesiastical titles, choral services, or sacerdotal vestments, especially at times when the government is on the side of the mob, displays at least as much bravery as the soldier who blows open the gate of a city. The Dissenters had manifested this virtue in abundance during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Yet, far from attracting admiration, it had served only to harden the hearts of their enemies against them. To one who considers the question with calmness, it will appear that Dissent has been a blessing to the country. It is synonymous with liberty of thought; and the Dissenters may therefore be regarded as the soldiers who have fought for and preserved to us this priceless privilege. The Reformation would have been of little value if the sceptre had merely passed from the Church of Rome to the Church of England.

On the 4th of May the declaration of war against France and Spain was published with the usual solemnities. It referred to the treaties of alliance into which his late Majesty had entered for the purpose of preserving the liberty and balance of Europe, and for reducing the exorbitant power of France. Those treaties, it stated, were grounded on the unjust usurpations and encroachments of the French king, who had taken, and still kept, possession of a great part of the Spanish dominions, and exercised absolute authority over the whole. Everywhere it was his design to invade the liberties of Europe, and to obstruct the freedom of navigation and commerce. Satisfaction had been required of him upon these matters; but so far from affording it, he had added an affront and indignity to her Majesty and the realm by his presumption in declaring the pretended Prince of Wales King of England. Spain he had also influenced to concur in this affront, and to join with him in his projects of oppression. Her Majesty found herself, therefore, compelled, in order to maintain the public faith, to

vindicate the honour of her crown, and to prevent the mischiefs with which all Europe was threatened, to declare war against the two countries.*

The declarations of the Emperor and of the States-general were proclaimed on the same day at Vienna and the Hague. The most prominent complaint in the Imperial manifesto was that the French king had put his grandson into possession of the Spanish dominions, some of which were fiefs of the empire, under colour of a will which he had bribed certain Spanish counsellors to present to the late King of Spain when reduced to such a state of mental and bodily weakness as to be incapable of reading or understanding. The Dutch recited a very long tale of their grievances. The King of France, it was stated, was evidently bent on subverting all Christendom; and therefore they, as the nearest and most exposed to the fire, thought it expedient to anticipate the execution of his designs, and take up arms in their own defence.

For three weeks after war had been declared, the Parliament continued to sit. Its business was unimportant; but an address from the Lords deserves commemoration. Under the Treaty of Alliance, the maritime Powers were entitled to retain whatever lands in the Spanish Indies they could conquer. The object of this stipulation undoubtedly was that England and Holland should not be altogether without a prospect of reimbursing themselves for the expenses of the war. It was now suggested that commissions should be issued to individuals and bodies corporate who might be willing to try a venture in the Spanish Main. The reply of Anne was that she would take all possible care in the matter. No such commission, however, was granted throughout the war; nor is there indeed evidence that any was applied for. The total neglect of this single reservation in the Grand Alliance in favour of England was afterwards made one of the gravest charges which the Tories brought against their adversaries in the management of the war. Why no captures were made in the Spanish Indies will abundantly appear in the course of this history. It will be seen how the attention of the Ministers and the resources at

* *London Gazette*; Lamberty; Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

their disposal were devoted almost exclusively to the great army under Marlborough.

It is proper before entering on the narration of the campaign to describe the situation of Scotland at the accession of the Queen. The years which immediately preceded and followed the Union well deserve patient study. To the historian of this reign it belongs to picture the Scottish people animated by a hatred of the English more intense and savage than seems ever to have been cherished for us by the French, and to relate by what means the two nations were, at the very time when their passions were strongest, drawn into an Union. It is the more pleasing task of the historians of the House of Brunswick to narrate how the jealousies of the two nations gradually subsided; how Scotland came at length to appreciate advantages which she at first rejected with contempt; how the transformation from a poor and barbarous into an opulent kingdom has been effected; and how that Union, once so intolerable to her pride, has ended by becoming an union in reality, of interests and of hearts.

The Convention, which met in 1689, had been formally turned by William into a Parliament, and had never been dissolved throughout his entire reign. The King had found the members generally well affected to his Government; and in view of the disturbed state of the country, it was not thought prudent to risk the chances of a new election. The administration had been carried on by successive sets of Ministers attached to the principles of the Revolution. But the policy which William had pursued in dealing with his Scottish subjects had been even more unfortunate than his policy in relation to his subjects of England. Religion had been the stumbling-block. The King, believing like most calm and philosophic spirits that nothing more was required of a Christian than obedience to the simple precepts of Christ, was utterly unable to comprehend the fanaticism of people upon points of secondary importance; whether, for instance, it was most consonant to the will of God that the superintendents of the Church should take the name of Bishops or Presbyters. That a nation should be divided about such trifles annoyed and disgusted him. It was with some difficulty that he was brought to consent to the

re-establishment of Presbyters. But the persecution of Episcopalians, who by this means became Dissenters in Scotland, he would not allow. Throughout his reign a royal message was seldom transmitted to the Parliament or the assembly of the Church without containing exhortations and injunctions to moderation. His reward for a policy which he imagined to be agreeable to Christianity and to good sense was that both sects hated him. The Episcopalians, forced to cede the pre-eminence to their rivals, naturally went into opposition, and were usually found voting and agitating in company with the Jacobites. The Presbyterians, for his refusal to permit them to work their will upon the Episcopalians, regarded him as a carnal man, an Erastian. To every good Presbyterian the sight of a Bishop was an offence. That such a monster was permitted to exist was sufficient to bring down a judgment upon the country; and the King, who restrained his subjects from doing the Lord's work, could be nothing better than an enemy to true religion.

To the imperfect views of the King on the subject of religion was added, towards the close of his reign, another source of unpopularity. The poor Scots, little versed at that period in financial wisdom, indulged for a brief period in a dream of riches and commercial splendour. A colony which they were to found in the Isthmus of Darien was to render Edinburgh the greatest emporium of trade in the world. William, at the instance of the English Parliament, refused all aid to a project which, if successful, must have reversed the position of the two kingdoms. The scheme collapsed, and its failure spread ruin among all classes of Scotchmen whose means admitted of curtailment. The nation, blinded with grief and rage, chose to impute the misfortune, not to the inherent folly of the project, but to the jealousy of the English and the treachery of the King. The Scottish Parliament showed its spite by passing an act closing the country against English woollen manufactures. So furious, indeed, was the hatred borne to England, and so unpopular was William, that nothing but the difficulty of selecting a new sovereign prevented a general rebellion. The Jacobites bestirred themselves vigorously. But the Presbyterians, much as they disliked William, rejected with horror the notion of recalling a Catholic prince.

The accession of Anne produced a considerable change in the position and views of parties. The Jacobites were less disposed to plot against her than they had been to plot against her predecessor. She at least had some show of hereditary title. It was presumed not unnaturally that she must entertain some degree of affection for her brother, that she must at all events prefer that he should succeed her than that the succession should pass to total strangers. If such were her wishes she would assuredly have opportunities, while on the throne, of promoting the work of his restoration. Meanwhile it would be advisable to regard her as a regent for her brother during the period of his minority, and to pay to her the same deference and obedience that would be due to a lawfully constituted regent.

The Episcopalian party was in ecstasies at the change of sovereigns. It was not doubted for a moment that the zeal of Anne for the political institutions of England would be at once manifested in her government of Scotland; that Presbytery would be once more pulled down, and Bishops again introduced. The leader of the party was the Duke of Hamilton. It was a great point for them to secure the dissolution of the present Parliament. The majority of its members had been usually submissive to William, and had therefore become immensely unpopular. If an appeal were made to the country at this season, Hamilton felt confident that he and his party would gain the advantage. He had therefore, soon after the accession, hurried up to London to endeavour to influence the advisers of Anne. He found them, however, by no means inclined to risk a change of Parliament while the country was in so disturbed a state. The decision at which the Privy Council arrived was, that as it was necessary that Scotland should contribute its quota to the support of the war, the old Parliament should be reassembled. The day was fixed for the 9th of June, and the Duke of Queensberry, who had officiated for William in the last session, was again appointed High Commissioner.

So confident was Hamilton that the Queen could not really desire the continuance of a Parliament in which the majority of the members were Presbyterians, that he determined to go any lengths in opposing it. It was not difficult to find arguments against the legality of the Parliament. In the first

place, it was questionable whether Anne had yet qualified herself to exercise the royal power in Scotland. A law passed subsequently to the Revolution provided that the sovereign should take the coronation oath before entering on the government, but omitted to prescribe in what manner and in whose presence the oath should be taken. The oath had been taken by Anne in the presence of such members of the Scottish Privy Council as happened to be in London. It was now asserted that it should have been taken in the presence of persons deputed for the purpose by the Estates of the Realm. Again, it was a fundamental law of the kingdom that the Parliament was dissolved by the death of the sovereign. An Act passed in the reign of William had indeed provided that the Parliament in being at the time of his decease should continue to subsist for six months afterwards; but the objects for which that Act had been passed were of a special character, and were expressly defined in the preamble. There were then apprehensions of a disputed succession, and the Parliament was anxious to preserve its being in order to watch over the interests of religion, and to support the person named for the succession in the Claim of Rights. These objects had been already secured by the peaceable accession of Anne: the Act of William intended nothing further, and was therefore, it was urged, no longer of force.

Upon these grounds Hamilton took his stand. Before Queensberry could open proceedings by reading his commission, he rose and insisted upon delivering a protest against the legality of the Parliament. "We are come here," he said, "in obedience to her Majesty's commands, and we are all heartily glad of her happy accession to the throne. Nevertheless the duty we owe to our national laws compels us to declare that we are not warranted in acting any longer as a Parliament. By so doing we are hazarding the loss of our lives and fortunes if our proceedings are questioned by any subsequent Parliament." Having handed in his protest to be formally recorded by the clerk, Hamilton left the House. He was followed by a large number of the members. There was much applause as the seceders marched through the High Street. They withdrew to a tavern standing near the Cross, called the Cross Keys,

and there drew up an address to the Queen justifying the course they had taken.*

Queensberry, not sorry perhaps to see the House cleared of his opponents, then opened the session by reading a letter from Anne. It contained the usual promises to maintain religion, laws, liberties, and the Presbyterian discipline, and the usual request for money. The first care of the mutilated assembly was to pass an Act declaring itself a free and lawful Parliament, and denouncing the penalties of high treason against all persons who should venture to impugn its authority. The next thought was of the Church. An opportunity presented itself which no good Presbyterian could suffer to pass. As the members looked round the House they became aware that only two or three Dissenters remained in their company. Presbytery had been already fastened on the nation by more than one solemn act of the legislature; but while the security was still new it might not be amiss to strengthen it with another rivet. An Act was therefore introduced confirming all the laws against Popery and Papists, and all the laws establishing the Presbyterian Church government which bigots had carried in the previous reign. An Episcopalian member, Sir Alexander Bruce, had the courage to brave the whole House of fanatics by moving that those Acts should be read; for some of them, he averred, would be found inconsistent with the institution of monarchy. Unfortunately the courage of Bruce seems to have arisen from fanaticism as strong as the fanaticism which he affronted. In the course of his speech he could not refrain from some reflections on Presbytery so bitter that the House lost all patience. The orator was ordered to the bar, refused to retract what he had said, and was in consequence expelled.†

It was not until every care had been taken to secure religion that the Parliament proceeded to the business which had necessitated its being assembled. The House, in high good humour with the Government, passed a liberal vote of supply.

* Lockhart's Memoirs. Authorities differ as to the number that followed Hamilton. According to the Records of the Scottish Parliament, it was only twenty-nine members. Burnet says seventy-four out of a total of a hundred and eighty-six, Boyer seventy-nine, and the writer of the Lettres Historiques eighty-three.

† Lockhart; Burnet.

The Queen was then empowered, in accordance with a request in her letter, to name commissioners to confer with the commissioners whom she should name on behalf of England upon the subject of an union of the two kingdoms. The session was brought to an abrupt close by the perverse zeal of one of the Ministers, the Lord Chancellor Marchmont. His ardour against Popery and his attachment to the principles of the Revolution were such that neither the entreaties of his colleagues nor the express injunctions of the Commissioner himself could deter him from presenting a bill for abjuring the Prince of Wales similar to that which had passed the English Parliament. The Presbyterians caught greedily at the proposal. The bill was passed, but the hatred it excited in many minds precluded all hope of any further unanimity among the members. The question of settling the succession to the crown next came before the Parliament, and occasioned violent disputes. Voices were at length heard proposing that the members who had seceded should be invited to return and give their assistance; a proposal which so alarmed Queensberry that, on the 30th of June, after the Parliament had sat just three weeks, he hastily prorogued it.*

* Lockhart; Lettres Historiques. The bill for abjuring the Pretender was not sanctioned, but this policy was perhaps adopted to avoid the vast amount of discontent it would have occasioned. I can scarcely believe what Lockhart affirms, that Queensberry had been previously instructed to reject any such measure.

CHAPTER III.

WITHIN eight days after the war had been proclaimed Marlborough was on his way to Holland. His wife accompanied him to Margate. Contrary winds prevented his yacht for five days from putting to sea; and there are some indications that the interval was passed by the lady in venting her ill-humour, and by the soft-hearted general in uttering entreaties for forgiveness and meek protestations of love and submission. At length the moment of parting came, and Marlborough tore himself from the society of his beloved Sarah. For hours he continued on the deck, sweeping the cliffs with his perspective glass in the hope of catching a last glimpse of her figure. When the land had faded from sight he retired in an agony of grief to his cabin. "If you but knew what I now feel," such was his passionate appeal to his wife, "you would endeavour to be easy with me. Then I should be most happy. It is you only who can give me true content." It is impossible to read this letter without recalling the most beautiful passage in the "Iliad," nor to avoid hoping that Andromache asserted her sway over the noble Hector by gentler means than were employed by the imperious Sarah in governing the affections of the English hero.*

At the Hague Marlborough found no less a personage than the newly-crowned King of Prussia. His Majesty had graciously condescended, in consideration of William's good offices at the Imperial Court in procuring the recognition of his title, to become a member of the Alliance, and to permit England and Holland to take into their pay those troops which were a burden

* Marlborough to the duchess, May 15—26. The correspondence of Marlborough is taken either from Coxe's Memoirs, the letters and despatches of Marlborough, or the Correspondance entre le Duc de M., et le grand pensionnaire Heinsius.

upon his scanty revenues. He was now at the Hague in a private capacity with the hope of establishing a claim to inherit a portion of the private estates of the late King of England.

The first point decided at the Hague was in reference to the command of the Dutch troops. Marlborough had instructions to press for the appointment of Prince George. Whether he executed his commission with a decent amount of earnestness we are not informed. The foolish pretensions of his Royal Highness appear to have been passed over by the Dutch statesmen with contemptuous silence. The Prince of Nassau-Saarbruck, a cousin of William, and Ginkel, Earl of Athlone, a commander of great experience, were candidates for the office more worthy of consideration. Marlborough had done little as yet to establish a military reputation. Except during a brief campaign in Ireland he had filled only subordinate parts in the field. But it was so plainly expedient that the Dutch troops should be directed by the same general who had the disposal of the English that the matter was not long in debate. Marlborough was declared commander-in-chief, with a salary equal to ten thousand pounds a year.*

The armies on both sides were already in the field. The Prince of Nassau had laid siege to Kaiserswerth, a small town on the Rhine, below Dusseldorf, in which Louis had the year before placed a French garrison, with the obvious intention of asserting his sway over the electorate of Cologne. Another army under the command of Athlone had assembled at Cleves; and Cohorn, the great engineer, had stationed himself with a third near the mouth of the Scheldt. Nassau had for upwards of a month past found his siege operations greatly impeded by bad weather and inundations from the Rhine; and a French army, thirteen thousand strong, had, moreover, established itself on the opposite bank of the river. From thence it cannonaded the besiegers with some effect, and was also able to introduce a small amount of supplies into the town. The perseverance of the Prince was, however, at length crowned with success.

* Lamberty; Burnet. One of Marlborough's first acts was to try and induce the Dutch to give up all commerce with France; but his efforts were ineffectual, as will afterwards appear.

Kaiserswerth, after its outer fortifications had been carried by assault, capitulated.*

Up to this time Louis had abstained from publishing any declaration of war. He was, in truth, supremely unwilling to take up the gage which had been thrown down to him by the Allies, and he was desirous that all Europe should be witness of his reluctance. The activity of his enemies had indeed forced him to send his armies into the field. Marshal Boufflers, a brave veteran, whose frank and soldierlike bearing rendered him an immense favourite with the French troops, had under his orders a numerous force stationed on the Lower Rhine. But Louis, at the outset, committed an error which he time after time repeated, as if no experience of the fatal consequences to which it led could convince him of his mistake. His own love of figuring at a siege or on a battle-field, and of plucking laurels without exposing his person to danger, had passed away. But he still adhered to the opinion that his soldiers would exhibit a higher degree of courage if animated by the presence of some member of his august family. He had, therefore, chosen to appoint his grandson, the Duke of Burgundy, to the nominal command of that army which he no doubt expected would be in reality directed by Boufflers. This prince had not yet completed his twentieth year. He was an amiable youth, docile and affectionate in disposition, fond of his books, and still more attached to his preceptor, the venerable Fénélon. He was, however, without force of character, and his extreme conscientiousness was the source of much trouble to himself and others. He seems to have imagined that the position in which his grandfather had placed him rendered him responsible for the safety of the army. To no strategical movement proposed by Boufflers, or by any other general who had the misfortune of being associated with him, would he give his consent until its advisability had been thoroughly canvassed between him and a few favourites as ignorant of the art of war as himself. Hence the presence of this son of France in an army invariably produced a kind of paralysis in its operations.

* Lettres Historiques. Kaiserswerth capitulated on the 15th of June, New Style. The dates with reference to matters happening on the Continent will always be given in the New Style, eleven days in advance of the Old Style, which still prevailed in England.

The fall of Kaiserswerth stung Boufflers into activity. He determined to vindicate the lustre of the French arms by seizing on the town of Nimeguen. This project, was, however, defeated by the vigilance of Athlone, and the prompt courage of the burghers. At once divining the intentions of the French, the Earl, by a rapid march, succeeded in reaching the town before them. He found the inhabitants busily engaged in preparations for defence. Although not a single professional artillerist was at hand, the guns on the ramparts were manned; some fieldpieces were dragged into position; and the moment the French columns appeared in sight a brisk fire was opened, and kept up so steadily as to bring them to a halt. Athlone meanwhile disposed his troops in and about the outworks of Nimeguen, and retained them all night under arms in expectation of an assault. The next morning, however, the French wheeled off, and vented their disappointment upon the parks and gardens of Cleves. Burgundy and Boufflers might well feel dissatisfied with themselves; for, with an army equal in strength to the forces of Nassau and Athlone combined, they had been neither able to prevent the fall of Kaiserswerth, nor to get possession of the almost defenceless town of Nimeguen.*

A fortnight after these events Marlborough arrived on the scene, and at once issued orders for the assembling of the army. That army should have consisted of a hundred thousand men. Under a convention concluded in 1701, between Holland and England, the former power had bound itself to send sixty thousand troops into the field, and the latter forty thousand. It had, indeed, never entered into the contemplations of the statesmen of either country that this large number of soldiers should be raised at home. It is perhaps not too much to advance—and nothing can better illustrate the prosperity of these two commercial countries—that had military pay been doubled, it would have been still insufficient to tempt a requisite proportion of natives into the ranks. But happily for the exigencies of England and Holland, there were regions in Europe in which a

* Lettres Historiques; Boufflers to Louis, June 11, in the Pièces relatives à la Campagne de Flandre. The Marshal's design had obviously failed; but he made a great point of having got within sight of Nimeguen.

life of peaceful industry was less appreciated or offered fewer attractions. The cruel wars which had devastated Germany during the seventeenth century had produced their usual demoralising effect. The insecurity of life and property had engendered a contempt for the pacific arts and the endearments of home. How, indeed, was it possible that the peasant should be contented to cultivate his fields or to tend his vines, when the coming harvest might see his cottage in ruins, his family outraged, and the produce of his labour consumed by French or Swedish soldiers, Catholic or Protestant freebooters? The whole Continent westward of the Rhine teemed in consequence with vagabonds who, for a few pence a day, a garment to protect them from the weather, and rations of coarse food, were willing to serve any commander who offered them these advantages. With the various petty princes of Germany it was easy to arrange conventions for a supply of their subjects; and it was evident at the outset of the war that the purses and patience of England and Holland would be exhausted before this rich supply of human life would fail. How many native English and Dutch soldiers were engaged in the ensuing campaigns it would be highly interesting to ascertain if reliable matter could be found for the calculation. In the first year of the war the native English in Flanders amounted only to four battalions and seventeen squadrons, or about eight thousand five hundred men. The Republic probably exposed a greater number of its citizens to the swords and bullets of the French; but the proportion cannot be ascertained. The rest of the army was made up of Danes and Germans of all descriptions—Hanoverians, Prussians, Saxons, Hessians, Wurtemburgers, and Palatines.*

By the end of the first week in July an army of sixty thousand men had gathered in the neighbourhood of Nimeguen. Marlborough was anxious to drive the French from the position they held near Cleves, as their proximity to the Dutch frontier was the cause of much uneasiness in the Republic. His plan was to march southward in the direction of Spanish Brabant. Any movement which he should make that threatened this rich

* See the estimate furnished by the States-general in Somers's Tracts, vol. xiii.

State with an invasion would, he felt certain, oblige Burgundy and Boufflers to follow him. It was not likely that they would make any further attempt on Nimeguen if they thought Louvaine and Brussels in danger. The Dutch generals expressed themselves, however, entirely opposed to this scheme. In their views, the paramount duty of the Allied army was to guard the frontier of the Republic. The Field-deputies of the States-general, a set of men who, in accordance with an old and somewhat absurd regulation, were always fastened on the commander-in-chief to watch over his integrity, and to temper his valour with discretion, took the side of their countrymen. Without the assent of these Field-deputies, Marlborough was unable to move a single battalion in the pay of the States. It was necessary, therefore, to appeal to the ruling powers at the Hague; and for three weeks the army remained inactive while a council, composed exclusively of civilians, was weighing the military arguments on both sides. A reluctant consent was then given to Marlborough to follow his own devices. But much precious time had been lost; and the eyes of the commander-in-chief had been opened to a most disagreeable fact. The high post with which he had been honoured by the States-general conferred upon him in reality little more than the privilege of suggesting plans for men ignorant of the art of war to negative.*

The army now crossed the Meuse, and entered North Brabant. The movement had at once, as Marlborough anticipated, the effect of drawing the French from the position in which they were menacing the Dutch frontier. In considerable alarm, they hurried up the Meuse, crossed the river in two divisions at Venloo and Ruremonde, and marched to interpose between the allied army and the wealthy towns of the Spanish Netherlands. On the 1st of August the two forces were in presence, and Marlborough, who had the advantage of numbers, was desirous of attacking. But the Dutch deputies had to be consulted; a council of war was called, and while the matter was in debate, the opportunity passed off. The night came, and before the following morning the prudent enemy was miles away. But

* Marlborough to Godolphin, July 13—25. He had difficulty both with the Hanoverian and Prussian troops.

one important object had been gained. Burgundy and Boufflers had succeeded in covering the western part of the Netherlands only at the expense of abandoning all the strongholds in the east. It was therefore determined in the Allied camp to devote the remainder of the season to the reduction of the towns and fortresses on the Meuse.

A considerable detachment was sent to invest Venloo, a town of some strength on the right bank of the Meuse, with a fort on the other side of the river. The garrison, however, numbering less than seventeen hundred men, was insufficient for the extent of the fortifications, and there had recently been much sickness in the town. Operations were commenced against town and fort at the same time. The Prussians, under the Margrave of Brandenburg, a brother of the King, invested the former; while Lord Cutts with the Grenadier Guards, and Brigadier Hamilton with an Irish regiment, undertook the reduction of the fort. The Prince of Nassau, who had departed to recruit his failing health at some baths in Germany, was summoned back by the States-general to superintend the siege. Cohorn directed the labours of the engineers.

Another opportunity for attacking the French at an advantage had been meanwhile missed by the timidity, the ignorance, or the captious spirit of the Dutch deputies. On the 23rd of August, the armies were again in presence through a blunder of the French generals. This time Marlborough felt so confident of victory that, without attending to his controllers, he issued orders for an attack. He little knew as yet the stubborn characters of those with whom he had to deal. The Dutch officers, without positively refusing to obey orders, wore away the time under one pretext or another until daylight was on the wane. They had made up their minds that some marshes between them and the army were impassable. Had Marlborough been a hasty-tempered man he would have at once resigned a position which entailed upon him the responsibility without allowing him the power of a commander-in-chief, or he would have at least despatched a strong remonstrance to the States-general. But to resign, or to say a word that could wound the susceptibilities of his employers, was his last thought. The one hope that he cherished was, that the sweet-

ness of his disposition and the suavity of his manners would in time overcome the jealousy of which he was at present the object. He bore his disappointment, therefore, without exhibiting a trace of vexation. His chief anxiety was to prevent the English officers of his staff, whose tempers were not so bland as his own, from saying things that might irritate the Dutch.*

All hopes of enticing the French to a pitched battle being now at an end, Marlborough chose a position near Maestricht for the purpose of covering the siege of Venloo. On the 11th of September the trenches were opened on both sides of the Meuse. In three days the sappers had pushed their approaches to within forty yards of the glacis of the fort; and from this short distance a fire was kept up against the walls which speedily silenced the cannon of the defenders. By the 18th the breach was declared practicable, and an assault was ordered. The Guards, headed by Cutts, who had been the soul of every forlorn hope during ten years, rushed up the glacis. The French, thrown into confusion by the suddenness of the attack, hastily set fire to a mine, and retreated across a bridge into the fort. The explosion hurled many a gallant fellow into the air; but the survivors scarcely noticed it in their excitement. In a moment they had scrambled over the palisades on the top of the glacis, and were after the fugitives. Some followed the enemy across the bridge, and entered the fort with them. Others threw themselves into the ditch, waded up to their chins through the ooze and water, and were helped up the counter-scarp by their comrades. Several English noblemen and gentlemen were among the volunteers. The young Earl of Huntingdon, just risen from a sick bed, found himself too weak to scale the palisades. "I will give every farthing about me," he cried, "to the man who helps me over." The garrison, bewildered by the extraordinary spirit of the attack, completely lost its senses. An attempt to retreat across the Meuse in boats was frustrated. In less than an hour four hundred men

* Lettres Historiques; Marlborough to Godolphin, August 27, September 7. He says, "I have but too much reason to complain that the ten thousand men upon our right did not march as soon as I sent the orders. If they had, I believe we should have had a very easy victory, for their whole left was in disorder."

had laid down their arms, and the Allied flags were waving over the fort.*

The town on the opposite bank still continued to hold out; but, with its principal defence in the hands of the besiegers, it was evident that the resistance could not be of long duration. Its surrender was at length hastened by an accident. While the garrison was in hourly expectation of an assault, a messenger reached the Allied camp with tidings of the capture of Landau, which had been for some time besieged by the Imperial troops. The Prince of Nassau, by way of celebrating this event, directed that every battery should fire three volleys against the town, and that the whole army should be drawn out in order of battle. The besieged mistook this action as the signal for an assault, and their hearts died within them. The white flag was hung out, and a drummer was set on the walls; but amidst the smoke and noise neither flag nor drummer attracted attention. Soon, however, white flags waving from all parts of the fortifications, and four drummers beating the surrender with all their might, made known to the assailants that their work was accomplished. A conference ensued, and terms of capitulation were arranged. The Allies, in haste to set about the reduction of the other fortresses on the Meuse, accorded more honourable terms than the situation of Venloo seemed to warrant. The garrison, upwards of eleven hundred strong, was permitted to march out with the honours of war, and to retire to Antwerp.†

Ruremonde and Stevenswaert, the two places next summoned, offered but slight resistance. The capture of Liege it was expected, however, would be attended with greater difficulties. Boufflers had been recently examining the defences, had reinforced the garrison, and had entrenched his army in a camp near Tongres, as if with the design of intercepting the progress of a besieging force. That design, if he had really formed it, he was soon, however, compelled to abandon. Marlborough marched directly against him, and the Marshal, feeling himself

* Ample details of the siege are given in the Lettres Historiques. The English sustained the principal honours of the attack, and had a hundred and thirty-three men wounded and thirty-one killed. Boyer; Lamberty, who gives the letter of Cutts to the Queen. Our George I. was among the volunteers.

† Lettres Historiques; Campagne de Flandre. There was an insurrection of the citizens against the French governor.

unable to cope with numbers superior to his own, at once relinquished his station, and fell back a considerable distance to some lines which had been constructed behind the little river Mehaigne.* His army, which had never been on an equal footing with that of the Allies, had been now weakened by eight thousand men whom he had been compelled to send into Alsace. In another respect his position was perhaps more comfortable —he was now disencumbered of the Duke of Burgundy. The moment it had dawned upon Louis that laurels would be difficult to gather, and that defeat and humiliation to the French arms were by no means impossible contingencies, he had withdrawn his grandson from the camp.

The Allies reached Liege to find its suburbs on fire, and the garrison, which had executed this cruel work, withdrawn into the citadel, and a fort on the opposite bank of the river named La Chartreuse. The people of the town submitted readily, and it would have saved some unnecessary bloodshed if the garrison, which could have no hopes of being relieved, had thought fit to follow the example. But as a refusal to capitulate was returned to the summons it became necessary to force the two strongholds. After a brisk fire had been kept up on the citadel for three days, the grenadiers again mounted to the assault. Their orders went no further than to endeavour to establish themselves on the counterscarp; but the ardour shown by both officers and men in expeditions of this nature was such as nothing could restrain. In three-quarters of an hour they were masters of the whole place, and the English, who had borne the principal share in capturing the fort, reaped also the principal share in its pillage. La Chartreuse, warned by the fate which had befallen the citadel, surrendered as soon as enough pressure had been put upon it to satisfy the scrupulous honour of its commander.†

The capture of Liege brought the campaign in the Netherlands to a close. Early in November the army separated, and the different regiments marched off to the winter quarters which had been assigned them. Marlborough, accompanied by Opdam and one of the Dutch deputies, determined to return by water

* Boufflers to Louis, October 2.

† Lettres Historiques; Marlborough to the States-general, October 23; Campagne de Flandre.

to the Hague. As the French now possessed not a single town on the Meuse below Liege, no danger whatever was apprehended on the journey. The guard of a lieutenant with twenty-five soldiers was therefore considered a sufficient protection for the party. At Ruremonde they were joined by Cohorn with a barge containing sixty men. The two parties continued on their voyage together for some distance, while an escort of cavalry, which had been furnished by the commander of Venloo, marched along the bank. In the darkness of the night, however, the barges parted company. At a portion of the river where the rushes prevented the escort from proceeding by the water's edge the barge containing Marlborough was surprised by a band of thirty-five French or Spanish soldiers belonging to the garrison of Gelderen. In a moment these fellows had seized the tow-rope, had dragged the barge to land, had thrown into it a quantity of grenades, and in the midst of the confusion had leaped on board, and taken possession. The leader of the band demanded the passports of the gentlemen. With these Opdam and the deputy were provided, having taken the precaution before setting out on their journey to solicit them from Boufflers. But Marlborough had neglected or disdained to request such a favour for himself. He now owed to the presence of mind shown by his servant his preservation from the greatest peril in which he had ever found himself. The faithful retainer slipped into his hand an old passport which had been granted by the French authorities to Marlborough's brother, General Churchill, and which by some chance he had about him. Fortunately the soldiers were more intent upon marauding for their own benefit than upon fulfilling those duties for which they had probably been posted at the spot. Their leader, having just glanced at the document, expressed himself satisfied, and turned away to the more congenial work of examining the baggage. Every box and package in the vessel was searched, and every article of value was of course abstracted. The scrutiny lasted for several hours; but as soon as it was completed the military robbers made off, carrying with them, as testimony of the vigilance with which they had performed their duties, the twenty-five soldiers who formed the guard.*

* Lettres Historiques; Lamberty; Boyer. The name of Marlborough's

This incident heightened the enthusiasm of that welcome which Marlborough would not otherwise have failed of receiving from the Dutch. A report had reached the governor of Venloo that he had been taken prisoner. That officer had promptly sent off an express to the Hague, and had marched out with every available man to invest the fortress of Gelderen, to which it was presumed he had been conducted. Tidings of the capture spread fast through the Provinces, and the whole Republic was in a state of agitation. The States-general passed by acclamation a vote recalling their whole army into the field. While the excitement was still at its height, the missing party, which had been delayed some time on the road by the want of boatmen and horses, suddenly appeared at the Hague. Then the public joy knew no bounds. The handsome figure of the conqueror was surrounded by a crowd of admirers. Some grasped his hands: others stood apart, and gave vent to their feelings in tears.* It was not without difficulty that he passed through the multitude to his hotel. The States appointed a day of general thanksgiving and rejoicing. No great victory had indeed been achieved, but the French had been driven far away from the Dutch frontier. For the first time since France had become the greatest of military powers, her Marshals had been challenged and challenged in vain to battle, had been fairly out-manœuvred, and forced to resign territory and cities.

Nor was it only in the Netherlands that the French arms had sustained unwonted reverses. On the Upper Rhine they had been equally unsuccessful in checking the progress of the Imperial troops. Early in the year Louis had sent Marshal Catinât to take charge of his forces on the eastern frontier. The reputation of this commander stood high in the opinion of all competent judges; nor was it considered by such judges that his reputation had been much sullied by some misfortunes he had experienced during the previous campaign in Italy when opposed to Prince Eugene. But Catinât enjoyed but

preserver was Stephen Gell. "He has cost me," wrote M. to the Duchess two years afterwards, "fifty pounds a year ever since."

* According to Lamberty, "Il y eût même des hommes et femmes du pays qui en pleurèrent de joie, et qui allèrent embrasser le Comte et lui baiser les mains. Cette tendresse plût tellement à ce lord qu'il s'écriât que c'était la plus grande satisfaction qu'il eût jamais eu de sa vie."

little favour at Court. He had been unfortunate enough to incur the displeasure of two personages whose influence over Louis, gently but artfully maintained, was far greater than the King himself was aware of. The Duchess of Burgundy had been offended by some reflections upon her father, the Duke of Savoy, which the Marshal had been so imprudent as to commit to paper; and Madame de Maintenon suspected that his religious convictions were tinctured with Jansenism. But apart from the influence of these two enemies, Catinât was not a commander suited to the taste of the great monarch. His modest representations of things as they really were, his gloomy predictions when he was in trouble, irritated and disgusted a master who liked to be flattered with stories that his soldiers were invincible. To commanders such as Villeroi or Villars, who, even when in situations of fearful peril, could have the assurance to send his Majesty word that the next post would infallibly bring him news of a brilliant victory, Louis forgave everything. Catinât had not therefore been appointed to command in the east without many misgivings in the breast of the master of France; and the complaints, the remonstrances, the pressing requisitions that soon came pouring in from the distressed Marshal sufficed to convince Louis that he had made a bad selection. He had instructed him in his usual haughty style to carry the war into the enemy's country. Catinât, instead of complying, piteously represented that his troops were insufficient to protect Alsace from invasion, that they were dying of starvation, that he had not money to buy them food. The only answers he could extract either from Louis or his Minister of War were impatient injunctions to act as he had been first bidden.*

In the middle of June Prince Louis of Baden, with an army drawn from all the circles of the Empire, formed the siege of Landau, one of those free Imperial towns of which the prefecture had been ceded to the French king in 1680. The fortifications of the city were in excellent condition; the garrison held out for more than three months; yet Catinât found himself even less capable of attempting its relief than Boufflers

* St. Simon; Campagne d'Allemagne; Mémoires de Villars; Lettres Historiques.

had found himself to deliver Kaiserswerth. Its fall, which took place in September, he fully expected would be the signal for an irruption of the Imperial troops into Alsace. With the small force at his disposal, he utterly despaired of protecting the province. His urgent entreaties for assistance at length, however, produced some effect. Eight thousand men were drafted from the army of Flanders into the army of the Rhine. But the rejoicings of Catinât over this accession of strength were soon at an end. An order came down from Court to hand over two-thirds of his army to General Villars, who was to proceed into Bavaria on a design which the King was bent on pursuing.*

Two potentates of some importance in Europe had recently declared in favour of France; the Elector of Bavaria, and his brother the Archbishop Elector of Cologne. The motives which impelled the former to this unnatural alliance was little creditable either to his honour or his understanding. His dominions were in the heart of Germany, entirely surrounded by the dominions of other princes leagued against the old oppressor of Germany. Against the Emperor he had no cause whatever of complaint; and to the Emperor he stood in the relationship of son-in-law. But Maximilian Emmanuel was thoughtless, ambitious, and so extravagantly addicted to pleasure that, although only in his twenty-fifth year, he had contracted more debts than the modest revenues of his Dukedom gave him any chance of paying. He had since the peace of Ryswick held from the King of Spain the post of Governor-General of the Netherlands. The enormous salary, equal to fifty thousand pounds a year, attached to this post, he was loth to abandon; nor was he less disinclined to leave Brussels, a luxurious city, then, as still, the resort of some of the best society in Europe, to return to his dreary palace in Munich and his sway over the half-barbarous people of Bavaria. He had therefore, after some consideration, determined to throw in his lot with the Kings of France and Spain.†

Having formed this resolution, he submitted to Louis a

* Correspondence between the King and Catinât; Campagne d'Allemagne.

† Campagne d'Allemagne. For the character of the Elector see the Mémoires de Villars; but it must be borne in mind that Villars hated him bitterly.

scheme which, in a military sense, was not without its merits. He was then in Germany at the head of an army which, although not numerous, still gave him the advantage over his immediate neighbours. His plan was to march about, seizing upon town after town, in the expectation that the terror caused by his ravages would both deter the Princes of the Empire from sending their contingents of forces to the army of the Rhine, and would compel the Prince of Baden to raise the siege of Landau. He requested Louis to send an army into Germany to assist in this project, and Louis, delighted to find an opening for his troops into the enemy's country, readily complied. The Elector, without caring to wait for the promised reinforcement, opened proceedings in September by surprising Ulm. The dismay caused by this act fully equalled his expectations. The Princes of the Empire had for some time suspected that the Elector would scarcely be found steady in his allegiance to the Emperor; but for this sudden dropping of the mask they were not prepared. It came too late to avert the fall of Landau, but it effectually prevented the Prince of Baden from executing any design he may have formed for invading Alsace. Tidings reached that commander that Villars with twenty-five thousand men was about to cross the Rhine. He considered that his first duty was to protect the frontiers of Germany, and therefore set off in quest of the French army.*

Meanwhile Catinât had, in the deepest despondency, transferred the greatest portion of his troops to the command of his subordinate. He could not sufficiently deplore the folly which could leave Alsace and Lorraine exposed to an irruption of the Germans for the sake of sending into a hostile country an army the safety of which must depend upon the word of a volatile prince, who, if the whim seized him, was quite capable of making his peace with the Emperor and abandoning his friends to their fate. Villars marched down to Huningen, just within the Swiss territory, constructed a bridge of boats, and was preparing to cross the Rhine, when the Imperial army made its appearance on the opposite bank. The Prince made

* Campagne d'Allemagne; Lettres Historiques; Villars. Catinât was not informed of the understanding between the King and the Elector until the moment for carrying their plans into execution arrived.

some attempts to destroy the bridge, which Villars easily frustrated. It was indeed no difficult task to outwit a commander so dull and negligent as the German. The French general dispatched two thousand men a few miles down the river, who, crossing in boats, surprised the town of Neuburg. The Prince stood aghast at the activity of his opponent. He at once gave up as hopeless the design of preventing the passage of the French army; and now a terrible apprehension got possession of his mind. The Elector was doubtless hastening through the Black Forest to join his ally. He might be at this moment close at hand. If his vanguard made its appearance, what would become of the Imperial army placed between two fires? The Prince, with unwonted alacrity, made up his mind to retreat in time. But Villars had watched him closely, and was not the general to allow an irresolute enemy to escape. The moment he saw the backs of the Imperialists he hurried his troops over the bridge. In the plain on the right bank he drew them up in battle order, and marched in pursuit. He came up with the Germans as they were struggling up a hill in the neighbourhood of Nördlingen, on the summit of which they hoped to establish themselves. A vigorous charge threw them into confusion. In a brief space the whole army of the Prince was flying in headlong disorder in the direction of Stauffen. The French captured most of the cannon and thirty-seven standards. Had the Elector, as Villars had recommended, made his appearance at this moment, the victory would have been complete. But he was far away, wholly engrossed with the agreeable occupation of capturing towns which cost him little loss or labour, and paid him a goodly ransom. Villars, fearful of proceeding any further into Germany without more intelligence, retired to Neuburg, and entrenched his army in the neighbourhood. He at length learned that the Elector, instead of marching to join him, was going further and further from the Rhine. In his vexation and impatience he suspected that his Highness had made his peace with the Emperor, and wanted to decoy him into a country where, isolated from all resources, he would be compelled to capitulate. The consequence of this suspicion was that he repassed the Rhine into France with all his men.*

* Mémoires de Villars; Lettres Historiques; Campagne d'Allemagne.

Upon another frontier of France, that of Italy, a commander whose name has descended to us side by side with that of Marlborough, had now maintained his ground for nearly two years against a succession of French marshals. The prominent part filled by Prince Francis Eugene of Savoy in this war, his great military talents, his simple, generous, and noble character, and the remarkable circumstance that through the many years in which he co-operated with Marlborough the harmony subsisting between the two generals was never once interrupted either by difference of opinion or mutual jealousy, must for ever confer upon him in the eyes of Englishmen a degree of interest secondary only to the interest attaching to their own countryman.

A strange mixture of blood flowed in his veins. His father was the Count of Soissons, grandson of a Duke of Savoy, and a not very distant connection of the King of France. His mother was Olympia Mancini, the daughter of a poor Roman gentleman, but the niece of Cardinal Mazarin. The restless vanity of this lady was the cause that, after attaining to a dignity in strange contrast to the humility of her origin, the last thirty years of her life were passed in hopeless exile, while suspicions attached to her name which made the very dregs of the people turn from her with horror. She was implicated in the confessions of a wretch named La Voisin. She was accused of having poisoned her husband, who happened to die somewhat suddenly. Upon a person of amiable disposition and unsullied character such imputations would not have rested for a moment. But the reputation of the Countess had been already tarnished by her gallantries, or, at least, her indiscretions. Her quarrelsome temper had, moreover, rendered her odious to the whole court. To wrangle with her highly-married sisters, or with other ladies, about precedence and privileges seemed to be the set business of her life; and she sometimes ventured to treat the solemn arbitrations even of the august master of Versailles himself with a levity which made the blood of her rivals run cold. Conscious too late that she had made herself the object of general hatred, she fled from the jurisdiction of judges whom she well knew would be her enemies. After incurring no slight risk of being torn in pieces by moral crowds she found

an asylum in Brussels. She subsequently visited Spain, and insinuated herself into the affections of its beautiful young queen, with the view probably of procuring her mediation with the incensed Louis. But misfortune still attended her. Maria Louisa died suddenly and mysteriously, and her death of course increased the load of suspicion under which the unhappy woman laboured. She fled from Spain in the same terror as she had fled from France, leaving behind her a new race of furious enemies. Again she took refuge in Brussels, and there continued to reside until her death in 1708, in that solitude to which a bad name and straitened circumstances reduced her. It is melancholy to notice how little affection she had managed to inspire in her children. Her most distinguished son visited her but once during her long residence in the Netherlands.*

Eugene, born in 1663, had when a child been destined to an ecclesiastical life. Two livings in Piedmont were procured for him before he was seven years old. He had reached the age of seventeen when his mother, loaded with infamy, was compelled to fly the country. The whole family was made to feel the effects of her disgrace. The pension which had hitherto been paid to the head of the house was withdrawn. The eldest son, now become Count of Soissons, passed into the service of the Emperor. Eugene was left without relations at Court, and with nothing but the income of his living to depend upon. His education was continued, but he hated speculative studies. It was his ardent wish to be a soldier, and he at length ventured to petition the King for a regiment. His request was refused; nor was this strange. His mother, besides resting under all sorts of imputations, was then notoriously in the pay of the enemies of France. Whatever may have been the grounds of the refusal, however, it no doubt lost nothing of its harshness by being conveyed to Eugene through the channel of the insolent and savage Louvois. It stung the youthful hero to the quick. In 1683 he quitted France, hastened to the court of Leopold, and joined as a volunteer the army with which the

* Particulars of the life of Olympia Mancini may be gleaned from the Mémoires de Madame de Motteville and St. Simon, and from the Lettres de Madame de Sevigné.

Duke of Lorraine was endeavouring to save Vienna from the Turks.

In the course of that campaign, made memorable by the victory of Sobieski, the young Prince so far distinguished himself that Leopold, to retain him in his service, gave him the command of a regiment of horse. He rose rapidly through the grades of military rank. In five years he had become a lieutenant-general. In five years more, passed in brave but fruitless endeavours to arrest the progress of the French arms in Italy, he had attained the dignity of field-marshal. The superiority of his talents for war was by this time sufficiently established to attract the attention of Louis. There can be little doubt that he was anxious to reclaim the deserter. It has been said that the French king tried to tempt him back to his service by the offer of a marshal's bâton, a government, and a pension, but that the offer was rejected with disdain. All the hopes and sympathies of Eugene were now transferred to the country of his adoption. He had become inoculated with the bitterness which his new friends cherished against the tyrant of Europe. France was to him only the country in which he had experienced neglect and insult, and which still rang with the crimes and follies of his mother. The invasion of Hungary by Mustapha II. was the occasion of his turning his sword once more against those restless troublers of the Empire, the Turks. The victory which he, in 1697, gained over the vain and foolish Sultan at Zerta, was so fearfully complete that from that day Vienna was delivered from all fear of a Mussulman invasion. It procured for the Emperor a peace which enabled him at a critical conjuncture to turn his whole strength against France, and raised Eugene to the highest military reputation in Europe.*

In little more than three years after the battle of Zerta commenced the war of the Spanish succession. Louis, as soon as he had determined that his grandson should be King of Spain, took measures for securing the Italian dependencies by pouring his troops into them. The Duke of Savoy was, or professed to

* There are numerous biographies, in many languages, of Eugene. The most famous biography is Dumont's Histoire Militaire. There are some memoirs professing to be written by the Prince himself, but which were written by his relation, the Prince de Ligne.

be, his friend; the Milanese was in the hands of a governor who had declared for Philip; Mantua received a French garrison. For a short time the Italian fiefs of the Spanish monarchy seemed so secure that the mind of Louis was at ease with respect to any claims the Emperor might advance. In the spring of 1701, however, Eugene made his appearance with thirty thousand men near the lake of Guarda. By a series of rapid and skilful movements he forced back Catinât to the Oglio, and formed the siege of Mantua. The surprise and pain with which Louis heard of misfortunes in a quarter in which he had thought misfortune impossible, may be conceived. It could have happened only, he considered, through the incompetency of Catinât. He at once superseded him by Marshal Villeroi. The confidence placed by the King in this vain, showy, ignorant man was perhaps the most fatal of all the mistakes of his latter years. On this occasion, however, Villeroi did not remain at the head of the French army sufficiently long for Eugene to profit by his blunders. The Imperialists had the misfortune early in 1702 to take him prisoner in an attempt they made to surprise Cremona, and, in ignorance of their true interests, detained him in captivity till the end of the campaign. He was replaced in the command of the French troops by the eccentric but really gifted Duke of Vendôme. That personage, having received considerable reinforcements, advanced against Eugene, and forced him to relinquish his designs upon Mantua. By this time, indeed, the Imperial forces had been so wasted by sickness that Vendôme expected little difficulty in driving them back into the Tyrol. Philip, who had passed into Italy in the spring, visited the French camp in the hope of sharing the glories of a triumph. But Eugene, although abandoned by the Emperor, who could either spare no more men, or was dissuaded from sending them by counsellors jealous of the hero's fame, still contrived to keep Vendôme at bay. He maintained his ground in Italy until the severity of the season compelled the French to retire into winter quarters.

While such were the military events of the year, the fleets of England and Holland, if not realising the expectations which had been formed, had met with singular good fortune.

During the winter months every dockyard in the kingdom had been the scene of unflagging industry.* By the spring such a number of ships had been got ready for sea as, it was thought, would infallibly preclude the French from venturing out of their harbours. Squadrons were sent to scour the Channel ,and the captures of French vessels were numerous. Before midsummer the prisons of England were crowded with more than four thousand men taken from merchantmen, privateers, and frigates; and some important information had been gleaned with respect to the naval designs of the enemy. It was ascertained that Admiral Du Cass was about to sail from Rochefort to Corunna, from whence he was to proceed to America and bring home the plate fleet. Sir John Munden, Rear-Admiral of the Red, was sent out with a squadron to intercept him. During twelve days the Admiral cruised off the coast of Galicia, and had then the mortification to miss his prey. The Frenchman, under cover of a fog, succeeded in passing the English ships and entering the bay of Betanzos. Into the unexplored waters of this inlet Sir John dared not venture, and returned to report his ill success. The news of his failure was received with that burst of impatience with which the English never fail to receive any disappointment at sea. The usual charges of incapacity and cowardice were brought against the unfortunate Admiral. His conduct was submitted to the judgment of a court-martial. In the opinion of the twenty-four captains who formed the court Sir John had performed his duty with as much zeal and ability as could reasonably be expected, and the escape of the French was attributable to those accidents which must be inseparable from designs depending upon wind and weather. But the public obstinately refused to be convinced that the man who had caused so much disappointment could by any possibility be innocent, and the discontent was so great that the Court thought it expedient to pass over Sir John Munden in future naval arrangements.†

Among the projects which had been entertained by William

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

† An account of Munden's trial is given in the appendix to Boyer's Annals for 1702. There seems to be no justification for Burnet's remark that the Council thought his errors flowed from want of sense, and acquitted him to save his life.

in furtherance of the objects of the war, the scheme of an expedition to Cadiz appears to have been the one upon which he founded his greatest expectations of advantage. It is evident that the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt was the person who suggested this undertaking.* Darmstadt had been during the last years of Charles governor of Barcelona, and had been the ally of the Queen of Spain in her intrigues to promote the Austrian succession. He had, however, deemed it prudent, in the excited state of public feeling which those intrigues engendered, to fly from a country where he ran no inconsiderable risk of being torn in pieces. He was a dull man, wedded to one notion. He was confident, in spite of all he had heard and seen, that not only in Catalonia, in which province he had some personal experience of the population, but in every other part of Spain, there was a leaning in favour of an Austrian sovereign. According to him, the acclamations which greeted Philip upon his entering the kingdom were nothing more than proofs of the fear which Philip's grandfather inspired among Spaniards. There could be little doubt that the appearance of an Allied army would be the signal for a general insurrection and shaking off of the French yoke. But even should this expectation be disappointed, there were other advantages attaching to the possession of Cadiz. It would serve as a base of operations if it should be found necessary to make a conquest of the kingdom. In the execution of that undertaking Darmstadt anticipated no difficulty. No task could surely be easier than that of subduing a country without fortifications built since the invention of gunpowder, and without defenders worthy of the name of soldiers. With Cadiz in the hands of the Allies, moreover, the escape of the galleons returning to Europe with the riches of the New World would be impossible. It is scarcely strange that the confident assertions of a man who had undoubtedly held a high position in Spain, and who could not but be credited with some practical knowledge of its people, should have misled the English sovereign and his

* This I conclude from the circumstance that, after quitting the Peninsula, he spent some time in England. He was unwearied in his attempts to gain over partisans to the Austrian cause. St. Simon declares that it was he who suggested the Cadiz scheme. He was a near relation of the King of Portugal, and did his utmost to draw that potentate into the confederacy.

Ministers, and should have fostered delusions which resulted in much useless effusion of blood and waste of money.

By the end of May thirty of the finest ships in the navy had been assembled at Spithead, and were there joined by a Dutch squadron consisting of twenty sail of the line.* What was to be the destination of this formidable fleet was kept a close secret. Four French frigates, which had endeavoured to observe its motions, had all the misfortune to fall into the hands of the English cruisers. It was arranged between the two maritime Powers that the chief command of the united fleets should be entrusted to an Englishman whose reputation as a naval officer had at that time no equal in Europe, Sir George Rooke. This bluff old sailor had recently been exalted to the dignity of Vice-Admiral of England. The acrimony with which Burnet pursues him it is not difficult to account for. Rooke had latterly contrived to irritate not a few honest Whigs. In 1698, peace having left him little to do, he had been so ill-advised as to enter a sphere in which neither his education nor his temper qualified him to shine. He had become member for Portsmouth. The old English views he took upon questions touching Dissenters, Dutchmen, and standing armies, and the bluntness with which he was accustomed to speak his mind, naturally created some disgust in high quarters. William had been importuned to remove the troublesome mariner from his seat at the Admiralty Board, but had nobly refused to punish a man for no greater offence than misdirected zeal. A Tory administration failed not to find in Rooke all the qualities that were desirable in an admiral, for he was an excellent seaman, a staunch Churchman, and a cordial hater of innovators and Whigs.†

The selection of Rooke in this particular instance was nevertheless not quite judicious. It should seem that he made no secret of his poor opinion of the expedition upon which the Ministers were determined to send him. He declared that his instructions were unintelligible. He was directed to get possession of the town and harbour of Cadiz; yet he was in the same breath directed to do everything to conciliate the

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

† Biographia Britannica; Campbell's Lives of the British Admirals.

Spaniards, and to try and persuade them that the Allied Powers were their friends, who were only desirous of delivering them from the yoke of France. The plain seaman professed himself utterly unable to understand how he was to convince the Spaniards of his friendliness by such acts as invading their country and bombarding their towns.*

A land force consisting of ten thousand English and four thousand Dutch troops accompanied the fleet, and the Duke of Ormond was appointed to the chief command. Ormond was perhaps the most popular nobleman in the kingdom. His heart was benevolent; his manners were graceful; and he bore a name which both in England and among the colonists of Ireland excited feelings almost of reverence. But he was destitute both of the military experience and of the moral qualities which ought to belong to a commander-in-chief. His army was reviewed in the Isle of Wight just before embarking in the transports by Prince George. Most of the regiments were composed of recruits, but the exertions of the officers had already brought the men into a state of discipline which was considered creditable.†

Throughout the entire month of June the fleet was detained either by its unprepared state or by adverse winds at the anchorage of St. Helen's. With the first day of July Rooke put to sea; but before he had been out twenty-four hours the wind shifted, a storm came on, and it became necessary to put in to Torbay. Here another fortnight of precious time was lost. The public, impatient of delay, began to murmur that there were other causes which kept the fleet in inaction besides contrary winds. The Admiral's design was to put off sailing until the season was too far advanced for operations at sea. Rooke, in fact, had been so indiscreet as to give his friends to understand how little he was inclined to the expedition upon which he was sent.‡

On the night of the 22nd, however, he again made sail,

* Burnet; Campbell's Lives.

† Boyer; Lettres Historiques.

‡ Burnet; but is he to be relied upon when speaking of a man he disliked? From a letter of Colonel Stanhope given in Lord Mahon's History of the War in Spain, it appears that there reigned from the first the most violent discords between the military and naval officers. Sea-captains were always averse to mixed enterprises.

and this time the fleet continued on its voyage. In passing along the coast of Portugal it was rejoined by several ships which had been despatched to obtain information. The reports made by their captains were regarded as satisfactory. Cadiz was apparently unsuspicious of its danger; there was no armed force in the neighbourhood; it was impossible that a city so unprepared, and so little capable of defence, could make any serious resistance to the overpowering force which would be brought against it. On the 23rd of August accordingly the Allied fleet, drawn up in battle order, swept into the bay of Cadiz, and cast anchor midway between the island of St. Leon and the town of Rota.

The first hope of Ormond was that the governor of Cadiz, Don Scipio Brancaccio, would not be found disinclined to the Austrian cause. With this personage the Duke had some acquaintance. They had been companions in arms during the wars in Flanders. Don Scipio was then in the Imperial service; and it seemed unlikely that a man who had been fighting half his life against Louis should have determined to devote the remainder to the grandson of Louis. The Duke's first measure was, therefore, to despatch an officer to the shore under the white flag with a letter addressed to the governor. His grace reminded the Spaniard of the circumstances under which they had last met, and expressed a hope that the zeal which he had formerly manifested for the house of Austria had not been since impaired. But Ormond's hopes in this direction were disappointed. The governor was faithful to his trust, and returned a courteous but dignified answer. He thanked the Duke for the compliments he had paid to the courage and fidelity with which he had served his Austrian master. It was, however, he said, his determination to display the same qualities in the service of Philip V., whom he regarded as the sole and legitimate inheritor of the Spanish monarchy.*

From the governor Ormond appealed with no better result to the inhabitants of Cadiz. A fisherman was caught, and bribed to carry on shore several copies of a declaration. The Duke stated that he had not come to Spanish shores with the object of making conquests or of inflicting upon the people the troubles

* Lamberty; Lettres Historiques.

and calamities of war. His purpose was nothing more than to deliver the good and loyal subjects of the Spanish monarchy from the insupportable slavery into which they had been sold by disaffected persons. All good Spaniards, therefore, who should not oppose his forces might rely upon his protection. But if, contrary to his expectations, they should reject the benevolent intentions of her Majesty and the States-general, then God was witness that they brought upon themselves any harm which the Allied troops might be forced to commit.*

It was now clear, somewhat perhaps to the mortification of Darmstadt, who had joined the fleet, that the Allies would get nothing which they did not win by force of arms. A survey had been already made of the shore, and places had been found on the island of St. Leon well adapted for the disembarkation of the troops. The parties who made the survey reported that every sign of consternation was exhibited by the inhabitants. The beach near Cadiz was covered with crowds gazing in wild dismay at the armament which had so unexpectedly made its appearance, and the only military force which was visible consisted of about two hundred horsemen.†

A council of war was held on board the Royal Sovereign. Ormond was for landing his troops at once. It was evident, he said, that the arrival of the armament had taken the city by surprise; and why not therefore take advantage of the fright and confusion? From what subsequently transpired as to the state of the garrison of Cadiz, no possible doubt can remain that, if Ormond had resolutely carried this plan into execution, the city would have fallen with little difficulty into the possession of the Allies.‡ But several of his officers had allowed themselves to be frightened by the silly tales of some fishermen whom they had had the misfortune to make prisoners. According to these men the fortifications of Cadiz were impregnable; the garrison was four thousand strong; there was an immense army on the mainland not very far from the city. In corroboration of this latter statement watch-fires were seen at night blazing

* Lamberty; Lettres Historiques.

† Boyer.

‡ This was afterwards the general opinion in England, according to Burnet. Both St. Simon and Mariana (Historia de España) confirm the accounts of the defencelessness of Cadiz.

all along the heights in the neighbourhood. The cause of these watch-fires was afterwards explained, to the no slight mortification of the Allied commanders. It proved to be true that the Marquis of Villadarias, governor of Andalusia, and a general worthy of the best days of the Spanish monarchy, was then endeavouring to raise an army for the national defence. His force, however, at the time the fleet appeared before Cadiz, mustered only two hundred properly trained soldiers; and such was the poverty of the Andalusian arsenals that arms even for this little band it was impossible to procure. The kindling of such a number of watch-fires as might serve for an army of fifty thousand men was merely a device of his to terrify the invaders; and, unfortunately for the credit of the leaders of the expedition, the device proved only too successful. An altercation, moreover, such as was usual in that generation when land and sea forces were combined, sprang up between the military and naval officers. The former declared that they depended upon the fleet for reinforcements and provisions whenever required. Rooke and his captains replied that from the moment the troops quitted the ships they would have to depend solely on their own resources; for if it came on to blow the fleet would be compelled to stand far away to sea. In the face of so many imaginary perils—the impregnability of the fortifications of the coveted city, the strength of its garrison, the unseen but innumerable army that was watching from the heights for the moment when the heretics should have the hardihood to abandon the protection of their ships—the determination of Ormond gave way, and he submitted to the general opinion that, for the present, it was prudent to leave Cadiz alone.*

Another plan was then suggested. It was absolutely necessary that the troops should be set on shore somewhere, as the supply of fresh water was failing. What could be a surer and safer way of reducing Cadiz than by cutting off those towns on the mainland upon which it depended for provisions? The walls of Cadiz might be impregnable; but the towns of Rota and Puerto de Santa Maria offered no such impediments to valour; and the latter was reputed to be the habitation of some of the wealthiest men of Andalusia. The prospect of obtaining

* Boyer, appendix to Annals for 1702.

plunder without risk and with little trouble held out such attractions to the harpies whom Ormond wanted energy to control, that it was embraced with but few dissentients.

Before daybreak on the morning of the 15th the disembarkation of the troops began at a point about midway between the two towns. A heavy surf was rolling on shore, in which some of the boats were upset, and a few poor fellows drowned. The grenadiers were the first to scramble, drenched to the skin, to land; and as soon as they had gained their footing, a small body of Spanish horse, which seemed disposed to dispute the landing, scampered away out of sight. The capture of a small fort in the neighbourhood, in which the guns were perhaps a hundred and fifty years old, was considered necessary, and was promptly performed by a regiment of Dutch. By the time, however, that the whole of the troops and the stores necessary for their immediate subsistence had been got on shore, daylight was on the wane. Night fell upon the army when about two miles distant from Rota. A halt was ordered, and the troops bivouacked upon the ground.*

The next morning brought an agreeable incident. The Alcalde of Rota made his appearance, followed by two or three of the inhabitants, signified his submission to Charles III., and presented to Ormond the keys of the town. Darmstadt was transported with delight at receiving this confirmation of his belief that all Spaniards were at heart for an Austrian sovereign. He took upon himself to create the astonished official a marquis on the spot.† The joy of the Allies was, however, a little dashed upon their reaching Rota to find that the inhabitants, instead of staying to welcome their deliverers, had almost entirely abandoned the place.

A drummer was now despatched with a letter to the Alcalde of Puerto, inviting him to follow the example of his brother magistrate of Rota. Villadarias, happening to be then in the town, the messenger was ushered into his presence. The angry flush that overspread his countenance as he read the missive made the poor fellow tremble for his life. "Return to your master," Villadarias said at length, "and tell him that we

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer.
† Lord Mahon's History of the War of the Spanish Succession.

Spaniards are incapable of changing either our religion or our king."*

Three days were consumed by the Allies in Rota, a period of inaction not perhaps unnecessary to troops who had been confined for two months to the close and pestilential atmosphere of the transport ships. No sign of any armed force in the neighbourhood had meanwhile been observed; but neither had the Allied commanders been cheered with any sign that the population of this part of Spain regarded the Austrian cause with favour. It was now determined to obtain possession of Santa Maria. On the evening of the 19th the army set forward with the intention of executing the march of ten miles during the cool hours of the night; but as darkness was falling some bands of horse made their appearance, which so disquieted Ormond that he changed his mind, and decided to bivouac on the spot. With the first beams of the sun the march was renewed, but with every circumstance of disadvantage. The heat soon became intolerable. The feet of the men were scorched and blistered by the burning sands. An increasing number of horsemen, moreover, wearing more the appearance of banditti than of regular troops, hovered round the columns, and prevented all straggling in search of water. It was not until the afternoon that the vanguard, perishing with heat and thirst, reached Santa Maria, and found it, as in the case of Rota, deserted by the greater part of its inhabitants. Almost at the same moment three hundred Spanish horse on their way to Xeres reached the town from the opposite side. The dismay of the poor men at the apparition of an enemy was prodigious. They hurried into a large enclosure, and at first seemed inclined to stand a siege. But a parley took place, and upon being made acquainted with the numbers of their adversaries, they deemed it wise to surrender at discretion.†

And now occurred scenes which British annalists and historians have candidly allowed to reflect peculiar discredit upon the Allied arms, and to have inflicted no slight damage upon the cause of the Allies in Spain. The soldiers were mad with thirst

* Boyer calls it "a rude and unbecoming answer;" Lord Mahon—who appears to found his account upon letters of Stanhope in his possession—Mariana, and Lamberty record a different reply from Villadarias.

† Boyer.

and eager for plunder. To restrain the appetites of men in this condition, lodged in a town which could offer no resistance, would have tasked the powers of the most energetic and high-minded officers; and, unhappily, the officers to whom Ormond had entrusted the duty of protecting the unoffending citizens of Santa Maria were disgraces to their profession. Sir Henry Bellasis and Sir Charles O'Hara were men far too covetous and unprincipled themselves to attempt any restraint upon licentiousness from which they hoped to profit. The first evening which the English and Dutch soldiers passed in the town witnessed an assault upon the wine-shops. For several days following bands of soldiers roamed about, breaking open and ransacking the houses, and smashing in their drunken fury every article of furniture which was too big or heavy to carry away. The churches fared badly. No superstitious veneration prevented Protestant ruffians from loading themselves with plate and trinkets employed in the celebration of the mass or dedicated to the use of the Virgin. In one sacred edifice the great bronze image of the local saint was, apparently for the mere love of mischief, wrenched from its pedestal, and thrown down upon the floor. The sailors from the fleet, which continued to be in communication with the army, were assistants in these scenes of robbery and destruction. Such energy was indeed displayed in sacking the town that the officers, fearing to lose the lion's share of the spoil, posted sentinels to intercept the plunder as it was being conveyed to the ships. Ormond, while these enormities were being practised, continued, for some unexplained reasons, in Rota. Accounts of the manner in which his troops were behaving were not long in reaching him, and appear to have given him much concern. But his temper was too easy and his nature too indolent to adopt at once the promptest and sternest measures for repressing and as far as possible repairing the evil. He confined his indignation to establishing a court of inquiry, and to writing home complaints of the conduct of his lieutenants, Bellasis and O'Hara. The reports which from many sources reached England of the proceedings of the armament excited one universal feeling of disgust. According to rumour the loss sustained by Puerto amounted to the amazing sum of three millions sterling. Under

any other sovereign than Anne a searching investigation into the whole affair would probably have been made; but a Tory administration showed a disposition to hush up a matter in which a Tory general and a Tory admiral were the principal parties concerned. Bellasis and O'Hara were indeed tried by court-martial, on a charge of promoting and encouraging the plunder of the town; and the former being convicted, was dismissed the service. But a royal proclamation, issued with the object of discovering in the ships articles forming part of the booty, failed to produce any results, from the remissness with which the search was prosecuted.*

While the Allies were wasting time in these inglorious exploits, their opportunities of being able to effect any real good were fast escaping. Cadiz, from having been in a state of extreme insecurity, had now become, by the exertions of its governor and citizens, well-nigh impregnable in reality. Both the fortifications and the garrison had been greatly strengthened. Galleons sunk at appropriate points obstructed the entrance to the harbour. The army of Villadarias was, moreover, rapidly growing formidable.† It is not probable that the proclamation put forth by Ormond upon his arrival, even if it really had any circulation, wrought a change in the loyalty of any one Spaniard in this district; but the sacking of Puerto could not fail to convince the population that the invaders were their deadly enemies. Still it was thought that the city, which stands upon an island, might be starved into submission, if the Allies could make themselves masters of all the adjacent coast. It was therefore decided in a council of war to lay siege to Fort Matagorda, and after effecting its capture to march round to San Pedro, and cross the channel, there only a hundred yards broad, by means of a bridge of boats. But in attempting to execute the first part of this plan the engineers encountered insuperable difficulties. The ground adjoining the fort was a morass, in which it was impossible to dig trenches which did not instantly fill with water, or to plant cannon which did not very soon sink into the mud. By dint of patience and exertion a

* Boyer; Burnet. In the Lettres Historiques, the disorders are related with less acrimony. St. Simon remarks, "Par leur pillage, surtout des églises, ils achevèrent d'indisposer le pays."

† Boyer; Mariana.

small battery of two field-pieces and two mortars was at length established; but before it had played for three days upon the fort the treacherous morass had claimed its own. Meanwhile the besiegers found themselves galled by the fire of some French and Spanish ships which had managed to bring their guns to bear upon them, and under these untoward circumstances the Allies, after sustaining a loss of nearly seventy men, gave up their design upon Matagorda in utter despair.*

The perplexities of Ormond now reached their climax. Councils of war were held nearly every day, but were productive of nothing but altercations between the military and naval officers. It had become evident that there existed no feeling in favour of the Austrian pretensions in this part of Spain. It was also manifest that the force of Villadarias, especially in horse, of which the Allies had none, was increasing fast. Dysentery, brought on by the fierce heat of the climate and aided by intemperance, was telling frightfully on the ranks; and, to crown all, Rooke now uttered a solemn warning that he dared not remain much longer in the unsheltered position he occupied as the season of the equinoctial gales was approaching. With deep concern, therefore, the brave and sensitive Ormond issued his orders for re-embarking. Three days were consumed in getting the men on board, as the Spaniards, now in great strength and high spirits, hovered in large bands round the flanks and rear of the departing foe. The English grenadiers, who had led the way in landing, covered the retreat, and were the last to enter the boats.†

The failure of the expedition might now be considered complete; yet Ormond was still reluctant to abandon all hopes of a more favourable termination. No sooner were the troops in safety than the deliberations of the officers recommenced. Fresh instructions had lately been received from England. A discretionary power was given to Ormond and Rooke to pass the winter in Spain with a part of the fleet, or to send a detachment of ships and troops to the West Indies, and return home with the remainder. The two commanders-in-chief held opposite

* Lettres Historiques.

† Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Mariana. There was some sharp skirmishing at the re-embarkation. The Alcalde of Rota, at his own request, was taken off by the fleet.

opinions. Rooke, who now regarded the Cadiz scheme with more ill-humour than ever, asserted roundly that it was better to send a squadron where it might be of real service against the French than to continue to waste time and labour upon impossible enterprises. Ormond, shrinking from the prospect of encountering the sneers and sarcasms of his countrymen, clung tenaciously to the project of wintering in Spain. Vigo was suggested to him by Darmstadt for this purpose, as uniting the recommendations of a superb harbour and a situation in the wealthiest and most fertile corner of the Peninsula. The Duke summoned a council on board his ship, the *Ranelagh*. Rooke called another council of his captains on board the *Royal Sovereign*. Each party kept transmitting its resolutions to the other until the inconvenience of holding separate assemblies got the better of the ill-feeling prevailing between the two branches of the service, and a general council met in the cabin of the *Ranelagh*. It soon appeared that on the most important subject under discussion the opinions both of the land and sea officers were nearly unanimous. In truth, the arguments against attempting any second landing in Spain were overwhelming. The Dutch ships were falling short of provisions; the troops were decimated by sickness; there was an urgent need of sending a squadron to the West Indies; the statements that the people of Andalusia would be found ready to embrace the cause of the Allies had proved to be delusive; and was there any sound reason to imagine that more favourable dispositions would be found among the people of Gallicia? Ormond and the Dutch commander, Sparre, in combating the force of these arguments, found themselves alone. By all the other officers a resolution was passed that the required detachments should be sent to the West Indies, and that the remainder of the fleet and transport ships should make the best of its way back to England.*

On the 19th of September the fleet weighed anchor, and was soon wafted by a favourable wind far from the scene of disappointment. The feelings of the discomfited officers were doubtless little to be envied. But it was fated that they should be saved from the disgrace of returning home with no

* Boyer.

better account to give of the expedition than that of its utter failure.

Some of the ships were short of water, a circumstance which is stated to have arisen from the crews having devoted themselves exclusively while on shore to the agreeable labour of plundering. Their captains were compelled to ask for and obtained permission to put in to Lagos to procure a fresh supply. Here they fell in with a messenger who had been despatched by the Imperial minister at Lisbon to give notice to the Allied commanders that the plate fleet, escorted by the squadron of Chateaurenaud, had reached Spain, and was unloading in the harbour of Vigo. The swiftest of the three ships at Lagos at once started to convey this important piece of intelligence to Rooke. By good fortune the Allied fleet had been prevented by rough seas and variable winds from making much progress on its return to the north, but it was only after a painful cruise of eleven days that the commander of the *Pembroke* succeeded in falling in with and communicating his news to the Admiral. That news, however, awakened transports of joy and hope. A council of war was summoned, and this time the officers were all of the same opinion. It was determined to fall upon the enemy before he should have an opportunity of escaping from the trap into which he had imprudently run. Two frigates were told off to look into the gulf, and report upon the numbers and position of the hostile ships. In two days they returned with the information that the treasure galleons had been drawn as far as possible up a narrow strait leading to the village of Redondela, that in front of them were about twenty French and Spanish ships of the line, and that the entrance to the strait was closed by a boom of masts and spars defended on either shore by batteries of cannon.*

Under cover of a haze the Allied fleet on the afternoon of the 22nd of October ran into the gulf, and dropped anchor off the town of Vigo. During the night the plan of attack was arranged. The land forces, now amounting to about two thousand five hundred men, were to be set on shore, and were to make themselves masters of the batteries on one side of the

* Boyer gives a very circumstantial narrative; Lettres Historiques; Mariana.

channel. The fleet was meanwhile to bear down upon the boom, and endeavour to force a passage through it. The entrance to the strait was too narrow to admit of an advance in line; nor was it known what depth of water there might be. It was therefore decided that the smaller and lighter ships should lead the way, and that the more ponderous should follow if their assistance should become necessary. The Admirals accordingly transferred their flags to these smaller ships. Rooke, who now displayed all his former energy and resolution, spent a great part of the night in passing from one vessel to another, giving directions to the captains and haranguing the sailors.

By the morning of the 12th each ship was in its allotted position; but the earlier hours of the day were consumed in landing the troops. The grenadiers, regiments then specially employed in the duty of attacking fortresses, and armed, as their name indicates, with hand grenades, led the way, and were closely followed by Ormond with the main body. The road was rough and hilly, and before the invaders had gone far they espied some thousands of Spanish infantry drawn up as if for the purpose of opposing their advance. This danger, however, formidable when viewed from a distance, melted away as the grenadiers continued to advance. It was soon evident that the raw levies of Spain were far from wishing to measure their powers with regular soldiers. The occupants of the batteries, who were chiefly French seamen, opposed some real resistance; but the ardour with which the assault was conducted in a very brief space determined the day. The Allies were now in possession of all the forts upon one side of the channel, and found themselves encumbered by some three hundred and fifty prisoners.

While this struggle was proceeding on land Admiral Hopson in the *Torbay* bore down upon the boom, and, with the impetus derived from a stiff breeze, forced a passage through it. With a gallantry that would have immortalised the name of any one but a British seaman, he at once laid his ship between two enormous Frenchmen, and received and returned their broadsides with professional coolness. For a considerable time the *Torbay* stood quite alone, for the ships behind her stuck at the

boom, and the sailors had to hew their way through with hatchets. The men fell like leaves round their Admiral; the foretopmast went by the board, and the *Torbay* was soon exposed to a danger more deadly than the guns of her enemies. A French merchantman, laden with snuff, was set on fire and allowed to drift down upon her. The flames of the burning vessel spread to the rigging of the British ship; but the activity of her crew was equal to the emergency, and the flames were extinguished before they had materially damaged the deck and hull. And now the boom had been broken in many places, and one by one the Allied ships passed into the channel. Two of them engaged and speedily silenced a fort on the side opposite to that where Ormond and his soldiers were making rapid progress. The others singled out each an adversary among the French and Spanish ships of war. For a short time the action was furious. At length Chateaurenaud, perceiving that every security upon which he had depended was gone, that the boom was broken, that the forts were captured, gave up the cause in despair. Setting fire to his own ship of seventy-four guns, he signalled to his captains to follow the example, and gaining the shore with his crew, hurried away towards Santiago. His orders were promptly executed. Flames soon began to dart up in every direction, and the Allies saw with rage and grief that the proud vessels which they had looked upon as their prizes were rapidly becoming the prey of the elements. The thirst for prize-money now seemed to obliterate in every British and Dutch sailor all thoughts of personal safety. Ship after ship was boarded in utter recklessness of the danger of explosions, and the Allies succeeded in rescuing from the flames six men-of-war in a condition which was still seaworthy. Thirteen others were burned to the water's edge, or were so far damaged as to leave to the Allies nothing but the melancholy satisfaction of sinking them. The great struggle was, however, to get at the galleons. They were in number thirteen, and had at the commencement of the action slipped their cables, and endeavoured to drift on shore in the hope that a part of their cargoes might be saved. As soon as the French commander decided that all was lost they were set on fire. Four of them were captured by the English

in time, five more fell to the lot of the Dutch; the rest were totally destroyed before the Allies could reach them.* .

Such was the victory gained by the Allies over the French and Spanish fleets; and it may be said that a victory so important and so complete was never gained before or since with an expenditure of life so small. The *Torbay* indeed presented a sad spectacle. One of her masts had been shot away; her yards and sails were scorched and blackened by fire; her shrouds on one side had been entirely consumed; and a hundred and twenty of the gallant fellows who had maintained her invincibility against fearful odds lay dead or dying upon her decks. But the loss incurred by the rest of the squadron was trifling; and the military list of killed and wounded amounted to only seventy men. At this cost had the French navy been reduced by sixteen and the Spanish navy by three of its finest ships, in addition to gun-boats, frigates, and inferior vessels.

The value of the cargoes of those galleons which were saved by the confederates has never been satisfactorily ascertained.† To speculations upon the amount of bullion on board the galleons which foundered an interest attaches which is not merely historical. Generation after generation has imagined vast

* For accounts of the battle of Vigo see Boyer's Annals; Lettres Historiques; Mariana; St. Simon; relation of the success at Vigo, 1702; Lamberty.

† Boyer declares that the Spaniards secured fourteen out of twenty millions of pieces of eight or dollars, thus leaving six millions, which either went to the bottom or became the prize of the confederates. The merchandise he computes as being worth twenty millions more, of which one fourth part was taken. According to this, the total value of the prize, bullion and merchandise together, would have been in English money about £2,200,000. Immediately after the arrival of the fleet, the writer of the Lettres Historiques was assured that bullion to the amount of £1,200,000 was taken to the Mint. But he was soon convinced that this was a tremendous exaggeration. In February, 1703, he states, that "when the galleons were unloaded, there were found a few ingots of gold, some bars of silver, and some jewels, among other things a crown of gold enriched with rubies, a gold crucifix also enriched with precious stones, twenty-two silver bars weighing seven hundred pounds, several great cases of silver ore, and two great cases of silver plate. But the greatest wealth of these galleons consists in cochineal, logwood, cocoa, snuff, &c., considered to be worth large sums." Narcissus Luttrell enters in his diary on the 19th of November that several chests of bullion, amounting to upwards of £100,000, part of that taken at Vigo, were carried to the Tower to be coined. He makes mention, however (March 20), of only £1,000 of new milled money with "Vigo" under effigy as issuing from the Tower. On the 28th of January, he sets down the total value of the cargoes as £500,000. On the 20th of February there was a proclamation for distributing prize-money among the officers and seamen. Burnet says a great part of the treasure was embezzled; but both the Government and the House of Lords appear to have exercised a good deal of vigilance. No official report seems to have been issued either by the English or Dutch Governments.

riches lying buried in the sands of the gulf of Vigo, and awaiting the engineer who shall have the fortune and skill to raise them. A few remarks upon this subject may not therefore be considered superfluous.

In the first place it appears almost certain that only a very small proportion of the captured cargoes consisted of precious metals. Some gold and silver was undoubtedly taken to the Mint, and five-pound pieces, crowns, half-crowns, and shillings were coined from it, distinguished on the obverse by the word "Vigo." But the silver coinage of the year 1703 shows an excess over that of the previous year of little more than six hundred pounds sterling, and the coinage of 1704 an excess of less than twelve thousand pounds. It is not unlikely that the plate belonging to Chateaurenaud and his officers, which was seized in Redondela immediately after the battle, furnished a large proportion even of this small amount.

The possibility is indeed not excluded that although but little silver was found in the galleons actually captured, there may have been among the foundered galleons some which had not been even partially unloaded of their bullion. But this possibility dwindles to a shadow when we reflect that the galleons had been for five and twenty days in harbour before the Allied fleet made its appearance. Delay there certainly had been in setting on shore the merchandise with which the vessels were laden. The authorities of Cadiz, it seems, set up a prescriptive right to superintend the unloading of galleons returning from America; and the council of the Indies had not given its decision upon the matter until just before the arrival of the Allies. But although this legal difficulty prevented the galleons from discharging their sugar, tobacco, and other commodities, there are strong reasons to believe that nearly all the treasure chests were landed and conveyed into the interior. St. Simon declares this to have been the fact, and his opportunities for acquiring correct information upon the point were superior to those of any Englishman.* In truth, both the Kings of France

* St. Simon says, "On ne laissa pas de prendre la sage précaution de transporter le plus tôt qu'on pût tout l'or, l'argent, et les effets les plus précieux et les plus aisés à remuer à plus de trente lieues dans les terres, à Lugo." He adds, "Il était bien demeuré encore pour huit millions de marchandises sur ces vaisseaux."

and Spain were deeply interested in this part of the cargoes; and it is scarcely credible that Chateaurenaud, who evinced his sense of danger by the precautions he took for closing the harbour, should have allowed the folly and sluggishness of the Spanish authorities to deter him from placing in security the property of his royal patrons. Nor must it be forgotten that, even after the Allies entered the gulf, a period of at least twenty hours elapsed before the battle was decided. The evidence may perhaps be inconclusive; but it cannot but establish a strong conviction that, although a considerable quantity of merchandise remained in the galleons at the time of their being set on fire, very little silver went to the bottom of the gulf of Vigo.

Ormond was naturally much elated by this extraordinary and unexpected success. His hopes revived of being able to pass the winter in Spain. He communicated a project for this purpose to Rooke. If he could but make himself master of Vigo, he doubted not that he might defend himself during several months. The continuance of an Allied army in Spain was desirable in more than one point of view. If there really existed in the country a party favourable to the Austrian cause, that party would be encouraged to declare itself. The troops would in any case be in readiness to push their success with the return of spring. The King of Portugal was thought to be wavering between the belligerent powers. An army so near his frontier might turn the balance in favour of the Allies. But Ormond stipulated that Rooke should furnish him with a considerable stock of provisions, and should also leave behind ships sufficient for the troops to make their escape in case of necessity; and with neither of these conditions would Rooke comply. His grace, he said, had just been a witness of the misfortune which had befallen the French through trusting their ships to these narrow waters; and it would be scarcely wise therefore to follow their example, and give them the opportunity of retaliating.* . . .

The prudence of this reasoning it was impossible to gainsay. The forces were accordingly re-embarked, and the fleet returned to England, leaving to Sir Cloudesley Shovel, who was now off Vigo, the task of bringing home the prizes. The news of the

* Boyer; Burnet.

victory reached England only a week before the arrival of those who had gained it. The failure of the expedition before Cadiz was at once forgotten. Ormond and Rooke, from being ranked as dolts and traitors, became the wisest and most zealous of commanders, and were welcomed on their entrance into London with acclamations. But the highest meed of praise was properly awarded to Hopson. The Queen bestowed upon the gallant Admiral the honour of knighthood, and a pension of five hundred a year.*

In another quarter of the globe the English had shown much activity and vigour. To beat the French entirely out of the West Indian islands had been always a favourite project of William. The struggle had been carried on with but little intermission during the twelve years of his reign. The interests of our colonists had been latterly maintained and promoted by the almost constant presence of an admiral whose name is still not unfrequently quoted as a splendid example of the good old race of English tars, a race which continued to exist throughout the last century, but which is now as extinct as the race of the Iguanodon—Admiral Benbow.

The exploits of Benbow, the story of his pickling the heads of a crew of Sallee rovers, and throwing them down as salt provisions on the table of the Cadiz magistrates, the bulldog courage with which he flung himself into combats with any number of Frenchmen, rendered him unquestionably the most famous mariner of his day. The frequency and suddenness of his appearances before the ports of France, and the vigour with which he conducted his bombardments, made him an object of almost superstitious terror among the peasantry and fishermen of the coast. The privateers of Dunkirk shut themselves up in their harbours at the least rumour that Benbow was in the Channel. His name was never mentioned, however, without blessings by the grateful merchants of his own country. Indeed, his popularity was quite exceptional. Virulent scribes of both factions, while venting abuse upon admirals, captains, and every one concerned in maritime affairs, would suddenly remember that the country did possess one good officer, honest Jack

* Luttrell, Brief Historical Relation. There is a monument to Hopson in the nave of Westminster Abbey.

Benbow. The principal cause of this universal popularity undoubtedly was that neither Whig nor Tory could view him in the light of a political enemy. He belonged to neither faction. For the quarrels between Churchmen and Dissenters, Jacobites and Hanoverians, he cared nothing, and had a hearty contempt for the sailor who took an interest in matters so extrinsic to his trade. To navigate his ship in a creditable style, and to beat Frenchmen, were quite sufficient business for one man. On land he possessed a wife and children; but he seldom left his quarter-deck. Indeed, he never could understand why naval officers were so fond of going on shore. "If a man has business on land, or prefers to be there, why does he come to sea?" he was accustomed to say. To him it mattered nothing to which quarter of the globe he was sent. To the apologies of William for sending him back to his unhealthy station in the West Indies he listened with astonishment. "It is not for a sailor to choose his stations," he replied. "So long as he is executing the orders of your Majesty, what should it concern him whether he is in the East Indies or West Indies, or anywhere else?" The King, it was said, often resorted to him for advice on naval affairs, and once asked his opinion upon a question frequently mooted in those times, whether it was for the interest of the service that gentlemen, or tars who had risen from before the mast, should be appointed to the command of ships. The honest and sensible reply of Benbow was that he did not see why gentlemen should be excluded from commissions who were capable of commanding, nor why tars should be preferred above their capacities.

With the common sailors Benbow was, as might be expected, extremely popular. He indeed carried out discipline with a sternness that bordered upon cruelty; but he took more care than was usual among the commanders of that age for the health and comfort of his crews. By the officers, however, he was bitterly hated. To gentlemen of birth and education the coarse tyranny of the old tar must have been sometimes insupportable; and it was unhappily by captains smarting under his reproofs for their laziness and luxuriousness, that he was attended in his last expedition to the West Indies.*

* Biographia Britannica.

On the 19th of August the squadron, cruising off St. Domingo, came in sight of a French squadron under Du Casse. It consisted of five line-of-battle ships, besides a transport filled with troops, and some smaller vessels. Benbow had then under his orders seven ships of war, although, it should seem, of size far inferior to those of the enemy. It was not, however, his custom to reckon chances when an opportunity occurred of fighting. In a moment the signal for battle was flying from the mast-head of his flag-ship, the *Breda*. His best ships were three miles astern, and to his surprise and mortification their captains showed no readiness to obey orders and fetch up their lost distance. The French, on their side, evinced great reluctance for the combat, and held on their course as steadily as very moderate and variable winds would allow. But Benbow was determined that, notwithstanding the unaccountable behaviour of those who should have supported him, his destined prizes should not escape. For four entire days he hung close upon the rear of the flying enemy, attended by one solitary little fourth-rate. Occasionally, by dint of clever seamanship, he managed to get so near the sternmost ships that engagements ensued, and during those engagements his pusillanimous captains brought their vessels within range. Instead, however, of pressing eagerly into the action, the horror-struck veteran saw them, after firing a pretentious broadside or two, tack, and make off as fast as sail would carry them.

Before sunrise on the morning of the 24th the English admiral found himself close to the flag-ship of the enemy. A furious contest began in the dark. Benbow's leg was broken by a chain-shot, and he was borne below to the surgeon. The gallant fellow was overwhelmed with grief and indignation. "I would rather have lost both my legs," he exclaimed to his officers, who pressed around him with their sympathies, "than have seen this dishonour brought on the flag. But do you hear," he continued, "if another shot should carry me off, show yourselves brave men, and fight it out." He was laid in a cradle on the quarter-deck, and continued, as long as the engagement lasted, to give his orders. At length, when day broke, he had the consolation of seeing his adversary lie a helpless ruin on the water, her mizenmast shot away, her

shrouds in tatters, and her sides full of great holes. Again his cowardly captains made up, fired a few shots into the disabled ship, and finding their broadsides returned, ran away as before. Determined to learn the meaning of this strange conduct, he signalled to one of the captains, Kirkby by name, to come on board the *Breda*. This summons was obeyed. Kirkby then, to the amazement of the Admiral, expressed an opinion that the enemy was much too strong for them, and that it was useless to continue the engagement. But his amazement redoubled when, upon calling a general council of his captains, he found that they were all of the same mind as Kirkby. To continue the action with officers who were so evidently determined not to fight, was a hopeless undertaking; and the Admiral accordingly returned, with a heart bursting with indignation, to Jamaica.*

A court-martial was appointed to investigate the conduct of three of these captains. It was proved by the evidence of some petty officers, that Kirkby was so timid that he either dodged behind the mast, or threw himself flat on the deck, when he saw a flash from the enemy's port-holes. He was therefore condemned to death; and the same sentence was passed upon another captain, named Wade, who fired only when there was no possibility of his shots reaching the hostile ships, and admitted to his lieutenant that his object in firing at all was to delude the Admiral into an opinion that he was supporting him. Both sentences were carried into execution as soon as the two men reached England. A third captain, named Constable, was shown to have been drunk during the action, and was dismissed the service. There were rumours, however, that neither cowardice nor drunkenness were the real causes of the extraordinary behaviour of these officers. Their design was, it was said, to allow the obnoxious Admiral to fall into the hands of the enemy, and to throw the blame upon his own rashness. Benbow did not survive the cowards or traitors who had brought disgrace on the flag. On the 4th of November he died of his wounds.†

* Boyer; Biographia Britannica.
† Boyer; Lettres Historiques (for 1703).

CHAPTER IV.

WHILE every part of the Continent was a prey to the confusion and misery attending upon war, England exhibited a scene of more than usual tranquillity. The accession of the Queen seemed to have contented all factions. Even that active crowd of conspirators which had been engendered by the Revolution ceased for a time to trouble the Government. The deadness of this tranquillity was a little relieved during the autumn by the double excitement of the elections and of a royal progress. Prince George was suffering from a severe attack of asthma. The physicians prescribed the waters of Bath; and Anne, the most affectionate of wives and devoted of nurses, determined to accompany her husband to that pleasant retreat.

The royal couple were received at every stage of their journey through the shires of Oxford and Gloucester with that exuberant loyalty which it is the delight of the English people to evince for their sovereigns, and which therefore a sovereign must be inexcusably wicked who fails to excite. One night was passed in the university of Oxford. The ceremonial was, as usual, pompous, and must have been fatiguing to a prince who was travelling in search of health. The authorities, in their eagerness to display their wit, learning and reverence for monarchs, allowed but little repose to their illustrious guests. At every step of the Queen and Prince, at their reception outside the town, upon their entering their lodging, upon their entering their state room, upon sitting down to supper, upon retiring to their bed-chamber, Vice-chancellors, Deans, and Masters of Arts approached them with addresses in prose or verse. Her Majesty was, in consideration of her sex, complimented in the vulgar tongue; but the Prince was mystified by Latin pronounced in the barbarous style peculiar to English universities. The next

morning Anne attended a convocation, witnessed the ceremony of admitting twelve noblemen and gentlemen to the degree of Doctors of Laws, was compelled to listen in the theatre to more poems composed in her honour, was feasted at a banquet, and after having received the customary presents of a bible, a prayer-book, and a pair of gloves, was suffered to resume her journey.*

On the evening of the 28th of August, the royal party, after paying a flying visit to Badminton, the stately seat of the Duke of Beaufort, approached Bath. The merry fashion in which the watering-place turned out to welcome its sovereign presented an amusing contrast to the grave reception of the Oxonians. A little way outside the city was drawn up a regiment of men dressed in a uniform resembling that of the grenadiers, and a company of two hundred girls, some of whom were attired as Amazons, and equipped with bows and arrows, while others represented queens, and held gilt sceptres and globes in their hands. A troop of dancers exhibited their antics as the royal coach moved down a new road leading to the West gate. At the entrance of the town the visitors were received by the Mayor and Corporation, and were escorted to the house of a physician in the abbey close, which had been fitted up for their residence. All the houses were illuminated: the streets were thronged till a late hour by a multitude bearing torches. Indeed, so great a concourse had flocked into Bath that the price of beds rose to a guinea a night. It came to the knowledge of Anne that notices had been served upon several persons whose lodgings were required for the use of her attendants. She at once ordered that these notices should be countermanded. Her attendants, she observed, must shift for their quarters, like other visitors, as best they could.†

Bath had not hitherto become, what it afterwards became so signally, the first resort of pleasure and fashion in the kingdom. The short visits paid to the city by Elizabeth and Charles II. had failed to bring it into repute among the luxurious idlers of the metropolis. Its extrinsic population consisted almost exclusively of invalids, to whom the hope of benefiting by its waters gave courage to encounter innumerable discomforts. A person of this unfortunate class would, after a rough jolting over

* Boyer. † Boyer; Warner's History of Bath.

execrable roads, find himself landed in a little, close, unsavoury town, and in danger of being torn limb from limb by a swarm of harpies in the shape of lodging-house keepers. The apartments in which he was at length installed were not of a kind to revive spirits exhausted by illness and fatigue. The invention of sash windows had not yet been adopted in this corner of England. The bed-furniture was of the coarsest description; the floor was coloured brown by a mixture of soot and small beer, and splashed with droppings from the whitewash which plastered the walls and chimney-piece. The first care of the landlord, after settling an extortionate rent for himself, would be to introduce to the patient his accomplice, a self-styled physician, whose business it was to prove that the bath nearest to the lodgings in question was the only one in the town suited to the patient's complaint. The visitors would, after employing the day in bathing, sweating and lounging, assemble in the evening under a booth to drink tea and chocolate, and to play cards, while the young and healthy members of their families danced on the bowling-green to the music of a hautboy and a fiddle.* But within two years after this visit of Anne came the turning-point in the history of the town. Richard Nash, a personage better known to fame by his prefix of Beau, came down from London, perhaps with the intention of retrieving his losses among the finished gamblers of the metropolis by playing with the less expert idlers of the watering-place. Such a man, already the oracle of fashion and the contriver of pageants which had diverted royalty, could not but regard with the pity of a great mind the rustic amusements of Bath. His singular genius for organisation was soon at work, and he found no want of supporters in the task he undertook. The visitors were naturally enthusiastic for a person who was the life and soul of the place, and the tradesmen were not slow in perceiving that it was their interest to add to the attractions of their city. Under his auspices as Master of the Ceremonies the open-air dancing speedily gave place to subscription balls at the Town Hall, the fiddle and hautboy swelled into a band, and the booth became a

* Venner's Bathes of Bathe. The worthy physician wrote in 1628; but the city appears to have made little progress until the time of Nash. Wood's Essay towards a description of Bath, 1749; Warner's History of Bath; Goldsmith's Life of Nash, which was compiled from Nash's own papers.

luxurious gambling saloon. The authorities, with this shining example of activity before them, began to exhibit a corresponding degree of energy. In a few years Bath was properly drained, paved, and lighted; the roads in its neighbourhood were so far improved as to render excursions pleasurable; rules were devised for imposing restraint upon the extortionate lodging-house keepers; and as a consequence of these arrangements for the comfort and entertainment of visitors, the city filled rapidly with people of rank and fashion. The work of converting the nasty little town into a magnificent city was completed by a succession of speculative architects. Before the close of Nash's long reign of sixty years, streets, squares, parades and crescents, built with a symmetry to which no other continuous lines of houses in the kingdom could show a parallel, had covered the fields and marshes which adjoined the small circuit of the ancient walls.*

The result of the general election, which was held in July, showed that a great change had come over the country. The feeling which had but seven months previously prompted Englishmen to return as their representatives in Parliament a body of men who could be relied on to support the King in his determination to maintain the dignity of England against France, had died away, and a reaction in favour of the Tories had followed. The Whigs found that, except in those great centres of commerce where they were absolute princes, and in those close boroughs which were mere appendages to their estates, their chances against the Tory candidate were but small. There can be but one reasonable interpretation of this rapid and capricious change in the sentiments of electors. No sooner was the national vanity satisfied by a parade of the fleets and armies, no sooner had the panic about an invasion subsided, and no sooner was the tax-gatherer demanding funds for carrying out a policy which had been deliberately chosen, than people began to grow sick of the war, to wonder what they were fighting for, and to curse the Whigs for getting them into the scrape. The momentary dread of France had passed away, and the country had returned to its old passions and prejudices. The popular men were no longer such as ranted against the French king,

* Goldsmith's Life of Nash.

but those who would promise to support the Sovereign to the verge of despotism to exalt the Church into an all-powerful tyrant, and to crush out the liberties of the Dissenters. There must be something peculiarly puzzling to the foreigner who endeavours to comprehend the points of the English character. At a time when Sovereign and Church are really absolute, he perceives the people animated by the most sturdy determination to resist them. At another time when Sovereign and Church are reduced to a reasonable measure of power, he perceives the mass of the people eager to lay down their liberties, and only restrained from doing so by a minority of temperate and thoughtful men. In truth, reverence for authority and love of liberty are the passions by which Englishmen are alternately swayed, and passions which do not appear to co-exist, at least with equal intensity, in the hearts of any people but Englishmen.

The Parliament met on the 20th of October, when the Whigs, who saw that they were deplorably outnumbered, made no opposition to the re-election of Robert Harley as Speaker. Anne, who had returned from Bath after a residence there of about six weeks, delivered the royal speech with her own lips. She alluded with becoming satisfaction to the evidences of duty and affection which she had witnessed in those parts of the country through which she had lately passed. She asked for supplies to enable her to carry into effect the public engagements. The funds voted by the last Parliament, she regretted to say, had fallen short of the estimates; nor had her own contribution of a hundred thousand pounds sufficed to make up the deficiency. For the encouragement of her subjects to bear the necessary load of taxes, she desired that an investigation of the public receipts and payments should be made in order to the detection of any abuses or mismanagement, and the punishment of the offenders. She expressed her disappointment at the failure of the attempt upon Cadiz, and her intention to make a strict examination into the disorders which had been committed at Santa Maria. She recommended the Houses to consider of some effectual method for improving the manufacture and preventing the exportation of wool; and her speech concluded with a few words testifying her desire to merit the

love of her subjects, and her resolution to maintain the Church as by law established.*

The usual address of thanks was soon voted by the Lords, and the Queen was congratulated upon the prosperity of her arms under the command of the Earl of Marlborough. But six days elapsed before the example was followed by the Commons, and when the address was presented it reflected little credit upon the sense of justice or even the humanity of its framers. The Tories were determined to take advantage of their numerical superiority to impose a stigma upon the memory of their late sovereign. "The wonderful progress of your Majesty's arms under the conduct of the Earl of Marlborough," they insisted upon saying, "has signally retrieved the ancient honour and glory of the English nation." The statement that the national honour had been retrieved necessarily implied that it had been lost or sullied in the preceding reign. Such was the verdict passed by the Tories upon the prince who had restored freedom to England, whose whole life had been one continued struggle with the common enemy of Europe, and under whose conduct the English regiments had shown valour and steadiness not inferior to that which had been displayed at Agincourt and Crecy. The Whigs tried hard to substitute the word "maintained," but the result of a division only revealed the weakness of their party. They could muster but eighty votes. The upholders of the censure upon William were a hundred and eighty.†

But this was not the only passage of the address in which the dominant faction displayed a triumphant and insolent sense of power. It contained some words touching religion from which the Dissenters might deduce with melancholy clearness that evil days were coming upon them. "Your Majesty," observed the Commons, "has been always a most illustrious ornament of our Church: you have been exposed to great hazards in its defence. We promise ourselves, therefore, that in your Majesty's reign we shall see it perfectly restored to its due rights and privileges, and secured in such to posterity. This can only be effected by divesting those men of the power

* Parliamentary History.
† Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Burnet.

who have shown that they want not the will to destroy the Church."*

It was impossible to misunderstand the meaning of this clause. Of what rights and privileges had the Church been deprived? Were not its ministers still in possession of every sacred edifice in the kingdom, except such modest buildings as the Dissenters had, since the Toleration Act, erected for themselves? Had they not still their glebe lands and their exclusive right to tithes? Were they not still at liberty to assemble their congregations as often as they pleased, and to preach and pray until they were weary? Did any law deny them access to the ears of sinners and heretics? But there was one privilege which the Church had possessed in the good old times, and for the deprivation of which it mourned. It was the privilege of handing over to the civil powers for punishment the individual who was bold enough to dispute its divine authority or to disagree with its tenets. The State had fallen for a time into the hands of unrighteous men, and a law had been passed by which it divested itself of the power of persecuting such Christians as declined to enter the pale of the Church. That law must be abrogated. The Dissenter must again be put to his election whether to make his submission to the orthodox expounders of the word, or to expiate his obstinacy in a dungeon.

The Tories were in haste to complete this pious work. Their numbers, already overpowering, were still further increased by the decisions in the cases of controverted elections, which, as might be expected, were given with some partiality against the Whig candidates.† Before a week had elapsed three members, one of whom was the brilliant Henry St. John, received instructions to prepare a bill for preventing occasional conformity. It may be instructive, before explaining the provisions of this bill, to review concisely the struggle between the Church and Dissenters which enlivened the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It is not easy for us at the present time to enter thoroughly

* Parliamentary History.

† "Barefaced partiality," Burnet calls it. But the Whigs proved quite as unjust when they got the ascendant.

into the feelings which induced even the wisest and most humane persons of a bygone age to uphold a system of religious persecution. The opinions of the educated portion of society have undergone a complete change. The free criticism to which the Scriptures have been subjected during the last hundred years has greatly weakened their sanctity in the eyes of men. The power of the priesthood has sunk almost to a nullity, the miracle-worker is regarded as a madman, and the supporter of unreasonable doctrines, instead of being rewarded with the appellation of saint, is now condemned and derided for a bigot. The governing classes, as compared with the governing classes of the sixteenth century, may be said to have grown indifferent upon the score of religion. The Church of England is indeed still upheld, but the attachment to it is by no means an over-mastering passion. A Tory of the nineteenth century, provided he has received the education of a gentleman, is not much disturbed at the sight of a Dissenter. It would appear to him the height of injustice that an individual should be burned at the stake, mulcted of his property, or even placed under civil disabilities of any kind merely for differing with the ruling powers about forms of Church government or speculative points of theology.

But in the sixteenth century men thought very differently. It seems to have been the general opinion of the governing classes, and indeed of the majority of Englishmen, that the stability of the throne, the quiet and prosperity of the kingdom, were closely bound up with the Church. The overthrow of that establishment, it was thought, would lead to the overthrow of every political institution in the country. To this opinion may probably be traced in large measure those severe enactments against Papists and Nonconformists which were placed upon the statute-book during the reigns of Edward VI., of Elizabeth, and James I. And it must be said that the events of the seventeenth century thoroughly justified the alarm which had been conceived. The Dissenters for a time got the upper hand in the State; and Church, throne, constitution, and liberty, all went down together.

As soon, however, as the country had settled back upon its old foundations, the persecution of Dissenters was resumed with

more rigour than ever. The first thing done was to purge the Church itself, which had got infected during the rule of its enemies. Charles II. had not been on his throne a year before he was required to pass an act, the effect of which was to compel ministers to a precise conformity with the rules of the Prayer-book. For the nonconforming laity a simple means was devised for excluding them from all power in the state. It was enacted that no person should be elected to any office in the corporation of a town unless he should have, within one year before his election, received the Sacrament in the form prescribed by the Church. Those who invented this precaution flattered themselves that no real Dissenter would be able to pass such a barrier. It was followed up in 1673 by the Test Act, which imposed the same obligation of receiving the Sacrament upon every person chosen for any office under government, civil or military, an act which it was fondly hoped would be the means of sweeping every Papist and Dissenter from the public service down to the very clerks, porters, and messengers.

The Act of Toleration with which William commenced his reign did nothing more than clear away some harsh statutes which rendered Dissenters liable to a heavy fine for visiting a conventicle. It gave them liberty to worship after their own fashion, but did not remove the obstacles which stood in their way to office.* In truth William dared not intercede further for a class of men so abhorred by the majority of his subjects. Both the Parliament and the nation, it was evident, were of opinion that, in conceding the bare point of toleration, the Dissenters had been treated with most imprudent generosity. In the course of a few years occurred an incident which created a thorough panic among Churchmen. In 1697 the choice of the City fell upon Sir Humphrey Edwin to be Lord Mayor. He took the Sacrament in the form prescribed by the Corporation Act: he was in consequence installed in his office; and he then openly proclaimed himself a Dissenter by resorting to a conventicle in full civic state, with the sword and mace borne before him. Attention having been drawn to the subject by this flagrant case, it soon became matter of notoriety that Edwin was

* The Tories always insisted that the term "toleration" was improperly applied to the act. It was merely "an indulgence to tender consciences."

by no means the only Dissenter who had obtained office by submitting to a single act of conformity with the Established Church. The various corporations of the city swarmed with occasional conformists. There were Dissenters holding lucrative places in the magistracy, the customs and excise, the army and navy, and even the royal household. It appeared therefore that the Corporation and Test Acts were not the safe barriers which had been supposed. There were Dissenters whose consciences were elastic enough to surmount them. But this was monstrous. If a Dissenter could find it in his heart to conform for five minutes, there could be no reason why he should not conform for the rest of his life. The dissenting of such a man from the teaching of the Church could be nothing but caprice.

The mode by which it was proposed to remedy the evil was by enacting a law that if any person who had obtained office by an act of conformity should afterwards visit a conventicle, he should forfeit a hundred pounds, in addition to five pounds for every day he continued to hold his office after making such visit. He was also to be incapacitated for holding any office again unless he conformed with the Church for a whole year, the proof of such conformity to be an oath that during the whole time of his probation he had never once visited a conventicle, and had received the Sacrament from an orthodox divine at least three times. If, after receiving office a second time, he should a second time relapse into Dissent, he was to incur double penalties and incapacity to be re-elected to office during three years.*

Such was the bill for preventing occasional conformity which was now brought into the House of Commons. Considered merely as a supplement to the Corporation and Test Acts, little can be said against it. A previous generation had thought it necessary to establish laws for excluding the Dissenters from office; those laws had been found inadequate to the object, and it was now sought to remedy the defect. No honest man could sympathise with a person who, really entertaining objections to the form in which the Church administered the Sacrament, nevertheless chose, for the sake of power or lucre, to make a sacrifice of his conscience. It might indeed happen

* Parliamentary History.

that a person dissenting from the Church on most subjects—for instance, its doctrines about baptism—might sincerely agree with its service of the Holy Communion. Upon such a man the penalties of the bill would seem to fall very unjustly. But a conscience so convenient must be always liable to suspicion.*

The bill passed the Lower House by a great majority, and was sent up to the Peers. There for the first time the merits and disadvantages of the general question, that of resuming the war against Dissenters, became the subject of fair debate. A majority of the Lords was still Whiggish; but there was a strong minority of Tories, and the strength of this party was much increased by the presumption that it alone possessed the royal favour. A large proportion of the Bishops, to the general surprise and scandal, appeared among the most strenuous opponents of a bill drawn expressly for the defence of the Church. They were the bishops who had been appointed by William, divines whose leading desire it was to discover some plan for reconciling the Dissenters, to reunite the scattered flocks of England into one fold. Burnet, whose indignation was always aroused by any measure which savoured of persecution of Protestants, exerted himself with characteristic ardour for the rejection of the bill. The penalties, it was urged, were outrageously heavy, heavier even than any to which Papists were liable. How had the Dissenters, peaceable citizens, loyal supporters of the monarchy as any subjects in the land, deserved to be treated with such rigour? Was it wise to revive that class of informers which had been the pest of the kingdom but a few years back? Was it expedient to irritate an important section of the nation just at a season when the whole strength of the country was needed for the struggle with France?† It seems, however, that these were not the arguments which had most weight with the Lords, and that their decision was influenced far less by considerations as to the justice or desirability of resuming the crusade against Dissenters than by considerations as to the manner in which the interests of political parties would be effected by the measure. The Dissenters were, as was

* The original design of the bill, according to Lord Dartmouth (note to Burnet), was to expose the Dissenters, and show what rogues they were.

† The arguments for and against the bill are set forth by Burnet.

natural, among the staunchest adherents of the Whigs. Any power which a Dissenter obtained by occasional conformity went invariably to strengthen that party. A rigorous exclusion of the Dissenters from office could not, therefore, but tell disastrously upon the ranks of the Whigs. Indeed, if such a measure were carried into effect, it was not unlikely that every corporation in the kingdom would soon become an exclusive assemblage of Tories, and the return of a Whig candidate to Parliament be made impossible. It might be that this was, after all, the main design of the bill.*

Influenced by this suspicion, a majority of the Peers regarded the bill with no slight feelings of hostility. There were nevertheless considerations which forbade its direct rejection. It was impossible to deny that there had been an evasion of existing laws, and that the evasion was an evil which required some kind of remedy. Under these circumstances a middle course was adopted by the House. The bill was, after undergoing an examination which lasted for a week, returned to the Commons with such a host of amendments and provisoes as rendered it all but harmless against the Dissenters.

The Lords might well get apprehensive that this usage of a bill upon which the Commons had evidently set their whole hearts would provoke an explosion of temper. So great were the fears that the bill would be returned to them in its original form tacked to the money bill, that the Peers, in anticipation of such a measure, hurriedly added to the standing orders of their House a rule that to annex any clause to a money bill was contrary to the English government and the usage of Parliament.† For three days a quarrel between the two branches of the legislature, which could not in a time of war have failed to produce disastrous consequences, seemed inevitable. Happily the Commons behaved with more forbearance than had been expected. They indeed decided that most of the amendments proposed by the Lords were inadmissible. A statement of the reasons for which the Lower House disagreed to those amendments was drawn up and presented to the Upper, and after some negotiations it was arranged that a free conference between

* Burnet.

† Parliamentary History; Luttrell's brief relation; Lettres Historiques.

the two Houses should be held in the Painted Chamber on the 16th of January.

Upon the day appointed the Lords sent as their managers an array of genius such as no subsequent generation has seen surpassed. There was the witty and brilliant Earl of Peterborough; Burnet, the largest-hearted and most learned of the bishops of his time; Somers, the greatest lawyer; and Montague, Lord Halifax, the greatest financier of the age.* Upon the side of the Commons appeared a young man who had sat for only two years in Parliament, but whose ready oratory had already secured him a leading position in the House. Much disappointment had been felt in Dissenting circles at the choice of sides made by Henry St. John in entering upon his political career. He sprang from a family which, although not avowedly at variance with the Established Church, was strongly attached to puritanical principles, and Dissenting divines had been his earliest tutors. He had nevertheless leagued himself from his first entering Parliament with those violent and extreme High Churchmen who were usually led by Bromley. By this party, which scarcely possessed one tolerable exponent of its views, the assistance of the clever and elegant recruit was eagerly welcomed. His private character was unhappily bad. He chose to conduct his amours and his drunken orgies with an openness and shamelessness which caused great scandal to the virtuous portion of mankind, and gave rise to a rumour that the decorous Anne considered that even his laudable orthodoxy scarcely made amends for the looseness of his morals. The Tories, however, fascinated by the wit, eloquence, and piety of his invectives against the Nonconformists, appear not to have thought him disqualified for contending with the serene wisdom of Somers upon a point of religion merely because he had not as yet finished sowing his wild oats.

Into the arguments adduced for and against the bill for preventing occasional conformity it is unnecessary to enter largely. The Commons asserted truly that it enacted nothing new, that it merely rendered the laws in being more effectual. The maintenance of a National Church was absolutely necessary for the peace of the country, and it was the conviction of this

* Luttrell.

necessity which had led to the enactment of the Corporation and Test Acts. The generation which devised these securities for the Church had never imagined that a set of men would rise up whose consciences were too tender to obey the laws, but yet hardened enough to break through them.*

The Lords, while not attempting to excuse the practice of occasional conformity, argued that in the state in which the bill left their House a person who visited a conventicle would incur the loss of office; and this they conceived to be a sufficient penalty for the offence. To superadd a monstrous fine and a long period of incapacity for resuming office was a measure of intolerable severity. A person who had committed felony could not be treated much worse. It was true that the Dissenters had formerly been given to sedition; but of late years their behaviour had been so far the other way that, in the greatest extremity of the Church, they had joined with her. A continuance of persecution was not, in the opinion of the Lords, the best way of healing the divisions which unhappily prevailed on the subject of religion.

The managers returned to their respective Houses. The Commons decided to adhere to their disagreements with the Lords' amendments. But in the Upper House the question of adhering to the amendments was not carried without a close struggle. The Tories exerted all their strength. On the day of the division a hundred and thirty peers, nearly three-fourths of the entire body, were in their places. Three times the House divided upon various forms of putting the question, and upon each occasion a majority of a single vote was declared in favour of adhering to the amendments. Both Marlborough and Godolphin voted with the Tories. Prince George, who sat in the House as Duke of Cumberland, took the same side. He himself was a notorious example of an occasional conformist. He had qualified himself for the office of High Admiral by taking the Sacrament in the required form, and had ever since continued to attend the Lutheran service of his chapel. Some misgivings as to the rectitude of his conduct appear to have disturbed the conscience of the weak man. The town was made merry by a story that, a short time before dividing, he whispered in his broken Eng-

* Parliamentary History; Boyer. The arguments are set out at great length.

lish to Wharton, an energetic opponent of the bill, "My heart is vid you." Slight as was the victory of the Whigs, it sufficed to shelve the bill for the remainder of the session.*

Not the least interesting incident in connection with this subject is the trouble which the author of "Robinson Crusoe" brought upon himself by endeavouring to make his countrymen sensible of their folly and want of charity in dealing with the Dissenters. It is not a little sad to reflect upon the calamities in which Defoe was for ever involving himself, calamities which never would have happened to him if he had been endowed with a little more worldly prudence and less of outspoken zeal. He, like Milton, lived in times when public feeling ran violently in one direction, and the man who stood up to oppose the current was certain to be struck down. It may be safely said of Defoe that no author ever wrote with a more entire absence of vanity, with a more ardent wish to instruct and benefit mankind, and with so little expectation of profit or fame. Of his extraordinary creative powers he himself seems not to have been at all conscious. His romances bear a close resemblance to those of the religious enthusiast, Bunyan, in the lifelike reality which makes them read rather like histories than fictions; and this charming peculiarity undoubtedly arises from the childlike simplicity of mind which characterises both authors. No ambitious sentence, no display of fancy, ever recalls us from the subject to admire the profundity or the wit of the fine writer. Neither one nor the other returns for a moment from the scenes in which his imagination is wandering. Bunyan, while in the body of Christian, is always marching along the road to the heavenly city; Defoe, while identical with Crusoe, is never out of his uninhabited island. But to the production of those romances upon which his literary fame now rests almost solely Defoe devoted but a very small portion of his life. From the age of twenty to the age of sixty-five the pen seems to have been never out of his hands. The spirit of teaching was strong upon him. Not a month passed and scarcely a week without some fresh volume of his composition issued from the press, treating of every conceivable sub-

* Burnet; Boyer. The authorities for this saying of the Prince are a note to Tindal, and Oldmixon (History of England).

ject. Parliament men were instructed how to legislate, clergymen how to exhort their congregations, tradesmen how to turn an honest profit, husbands and wives, fathers and children, masters and servants how to behave in their domestic relations, painters and poets how to become experts in their art, and young people how to make love becomingly. But these subjects were rather the lucubrations of Defoe. His serious occupation was with politics, and it is safe to assert that from the accession of Anne to the death of George I., a period of twenty-five years, there was no important question of government, religion, or trade, upon which he did not publish an exhaustive treatise. For his own sake it is to be regretted that he ever embarked on the troubled waters of controversy. His ardent imagination always hurried him straight to his mark without a thought on such sublunary things as angry Ministers, matter-of-fact Attorney-Generals, and the law of libel. He was, indeed, one of those assertors of liberty to whom the people of England at this day owe much. But when we consider the abundance of such scribblers as Oldmixon, Maynwaring, Drake, and Davenant, who were always ready to do battle for the cause, we cannot but deplore that so valuable a martyr should have thought it his duty to offer himself up as a sacrifice at the shrine of freedom.

The threatening attitude of the Tories towards the Dissenters could not fail to rouse Defoe. In a pamphlet entitled "The Shortest Way with the Dissenters," he endeavoured, by a caricatured expression of the views and wishes of the persecuting party, to make them ashamed of themselves. If every person found at a conventicle, he sarcastically urged, were banished the nation and the preacher hanged, we should not hear much longer of Dissent. The irony of the suggestion, he presumed, would not pass for a moment undetected. But Defoe had very much over-estimated the hearts and intellects of his countrymen. To have a St. Bartholemew's day for the Dissenters, to rekindle the fires of Smithfield, did not appear measures at all too strong to the zealous Churchmen, who, attracted by the title, purchased the book. There were grave and learned persons, members of the universities, who for some days thought the fierce little pamphlet excellent reading. Defoe had actually to publish an explanation of his meaning before it was under-

stood.* But when it became known that the author was himself a Dissenter, and that his work was intended for a sarcasm upon the high Tories, the wrath of that party was boundless. The House of Commons ordered that the book should be publicly burned by the hangman. The Ministers promptly took up the matter, and, as Defoe had concealed himself, offered a reward of fifty pounds for information which should lead to his apprehension. He was described as a middle-sized, spare man about forty years old, of a brown complexion and dark brown coloured hair, but who wore a wig, with a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth. As nothing, however, could be heard of him, the Ministers, determined to have some victim, arrested the printer and publisher, a measure which succeeded in drawing Defoe from his hiding place. He was indicted in the Queen's Bench on a charge of having published a seditious libel. His counsel, not, as we should think, unwisely, recommended him to make no defence, but to throw himself upon the mercy of the sovereign. Much mercy, however, from a sovereign in whose eyes to reflect upon the fury of the High Church party was to reflect upon the Christian religion and the divine institution of monarchy, an active Whig and Dissenter like Defoe could scarcely expect. He was condemned to pay a fine of two hundred marks, to stand three times in the pillory, to be imprisoned during the Queen's pleasure, and to find sureties for his good behaviour during seven years. This rigorous sentence was carried into execution. Upon the 29th of July, 1703, and the two following days, one of the most famous of English literary geniuses, and an honest though not a prudent man, was exposed to public derision in various parts of the city with his head and hands thrust through a board. The mob, instead of pelting him, is stated to have drunk his health with cheers. But this most unusual conduct we cannot venture to attribute to the mob being more merciful or more discriminating than the Government, when we consider that throughout this reign of Anne public opinion was always on the side of the Church and violently hostile to Dissenters. It seems much more probable that the honesty of Defoe's commercial life, com-

* Defoe's Shortest Way with the Dissenters; the brief explication of the author; the pamphlets to which his treatise gave rise.

bined with his social and literary talents, had procured him a multitude of friends, that they gathered round him on the day of his punishment, and paid for the liquor which was quaffed in his honour. In prison Defoe was detained for a whole year, his incarceration involving his complete ruin by his being forced to discontinue a thriving manufacture of pantiles which he had established at Tilbury.*

The debates upon the bill for preventing occasional conformity had extended over a period of more than three months. In the intervals between their resumption several other important matters had engaged attention.

The 12th of November had been appointed by Anne for public thanksgiving for the successes of the Allied arms, and upon that day both Houses attended her Majesty to St. Paul's. The spectacle was the most splendid display of regal pomp which had been witnessed within living memory. From St. James's to Temple Bar the streets were lined on each side by the Westminster militia, and from the Bar to the cathedral by the blue and green regiments of the trained bands. The procession of coaches containing the Commons, the Peers in their robes, the judges and officers of state, bade fair to be interminable; but at length came the royal footmen and yeomen of the guard, preceding her Majesty in the state-coach. Among the Peers was recognised Ormond, who had but just returned from Vigo, and whose appearance called forth repeated bursts of cheering. The strains of the *Te Deum* which rose on that day from the choir and echoed among the arches of the still unfinished cathedral were the more impressive to those who reflected that upwards of a century had passed since the defeat of the Spanish Armada had afforded occasion for a similar thanksgiving to the Almighty. The distant roar of the Tower guns and of those in St. James's Park increased the solemnity of the festival. There was in the evening a general illumination. The principal attraction was Ludgate, which was lighted up with lamps arranged in the form of a pyramid, and displayed a Latin inscription in which the names of Anne and George were followed by those of Ormond, Marlborough, and Rooke.†

* See the various biographies of Defoe.
† Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Luttrell.

To Ormond the thanks of the Peers were returned on the following day, when he resumed his seat in their House, for his signal services at Vigo. The Commons had a few days previously passed a vote of thanks to him conjointly with Rooke. The animosity, however, prevailing between the two commanders was the cause of much uneasiness to their friends. Each of them persisted in declaring that the other was to blame for the miscarriage at Cadiz, and Ormond was determined to press for a regular inquiry into the whole business. His advisers could perceive no advantage in attacking the reputation of a man so much a favourite both at Court and with the representatives of the people as Rooke. The good fortune at Vigo, they argued, had inclined everybody to forget all about the failure at Cadiz. The Parliament was satisfied, the nation was satisfied, and was it expedient under such a happy combination of circumstances to open up questions which could only breed contention? The Ministers were especially anxious to avert inquiry. If a committee entered upon an investigation Rooke would necessarily be summoned as a witness, and to have the opinions of the best naval authority in the kingdom made public as to the wisdom of the Government in planning the expedition was no agreeable prospect. But the sensitiveness of Ormond allowed his friends no rest. The committee of inquiry was, at length, upon their motion appointed. It appears to have consisted chiefly of Peers eager to exonerate the Duke at the expense of his colleague. Rooke was examined, and delivered himself, as the Ministers had feared, in very free terms upon the folly of the business upon which he had been sent. The report of the committee was unfavourable to him; but when the report was laid before the House Rooke's defenders mustered in force, and were aided by the whole strength of the Court. The report was rejected, and instead of it a vote was carried "that he had done his duty, pursuant to the councils of war, like a brave officer, and to the honour of the British nation."*

On the 28th of November Marlborough returned home, the most famous of living men. A committee of the Commons, of which Sir Edward Seymour was spokesman, waited

* Parliamentary History; Burnet; Boyer; Lettres Historiques.

upon him shortly after his arrival to express the thanks of their House for his great services. Three days afterwards Anne declared in council her intention of making him a Duke.* For such a reward the public mind was not unprepared. Marlborough had in a single campaign achieved great things. He had beaten the French out of a great part of the Netherlands. He had dissolved the spell which the French arms had exercised over Europe during forty years. He had restored to his countrymen the proud conviction that, when properly led, they were no less a match for the soldiers of France than had been their forefathers. But the satisfaction caused by the announcement that Marlborough had been advanced a step in the peerage was soon considerably diminished. A message was sent by Anne to the Commons acquainting them that with the Dukedom she had conferred upon this meritorious subject a pension of five thousand pounds a year upon the revenues of the Post-office. She was unable, she added, to grant this pension for a longer period than for her own life; and as she was desirous that it should continue to co-exist with the title, she hoped that the House, considering the reasonableness of the case, would devise some proper means for carrying her wishes into effect.† The reading of this message caused a stupor of surprise and disgust. No one seems to have doubted that Marlborough himself was the instigator of this request for money; and in one moment he had fallen from his position as a hero into that of a mere Court favourite, a greedy sycophant preying upon the generosity of a weak, fond, foolish Queen. The Speaker stood up and looked round, but no one rose to utter a word. At length one bold member broke silence, and a rush of angry oratory followed the breaking of the ice. The Tories had as yet no reason to suspect Marlborough's fidelity to them. They had indeed but recently framed an address lauding him in extravagant terms. Yet it was from the Tories that came the bitterest sarcasms upon his love of money. Sir Christopher Musgrave, one of the chiefs of the party, reminded the House of the posts and salaries enjoyed by the Earl and his Countess.

* Boyer. This was on the 2nd of December. The patent creating him Marquis of Blandford and Duke of Marlborough is dated 14th of December.

† Parliamentary History; Boyer; Lettres Historiques.

"I have no wish," he said, "to derogate from his services, but I must say he is well paid for them."*

The surprise of Marlborough at the spirit in which the Commons received the request for money probably equalled the surprise of the Commons that such a request should have been made. He could not have forgotten the storm which the lavish grants of William had excited only two years before, but he may have thought that the opposition then shown was less to the principle of grants than to the foreigners in whose favour they were usually made. He saw that he had overrated his popularity: he was doubtless unaware that his reputation for covetousness was fully equal to his reputation for ability. He made haste to repair his error. A second message informed the Commons that the Duke had declined to avail himself of her Majesty's gracious intentions in his favour. But the House was not inclined to let slip so fair an occasion for recording its sentiments on royal grants. An address was sent up to Anne. It was with unspeakable grief, remarked the Commons, that they found themselves unable to comply with any request emanating from her, owing to their apprehensions of making a precedent for future alienations of the revenues of the crown, which had been so much reduced by the exorbitant grants of his late Majesty.†

A few weeks before a request of Anne had been responded to by the Commons with even excessive liberality; but in this case the alienation of revenue was contingent upon circumstances which were little likely to arise, and could not in any event be of long continuance. Prince George was entitled under the settlement made upon his marriage to a single payment only of twenty thousand pounds in case he survived his consort. The reasonableness of making further provision for him was apparent, and a message from her Majesty to this effect was therefore taken at once into consideration. Howe, grateful for his seat in the Privy Council, and perhaps in hopes of still greater favours, moved that the contingent annuity to the Prince should be a hundred thousand pounds; and this enormous sum, double what had ever been allowed for the jointure of a Queen, was agreed to with little opposition. It

* Oldmixon, History of England. † Parliamentary History.

cannot be doubted, however, that the age and state of health of the possible pensioner were circumstances taken silently into consideration by members so generous with the public money.* An ill-judged and unnecessary clause introduced into the bill to exempt his Royal Highness from certain restrictions imposed by a previous statute upon naturalised subjects had the effect of causing a division in the Upper House, and Marlborough had the disgust of seeing among the dissentients who recorded their protest to the bill his Whig son-in-law, Lord Sunderland.†

Meanwhile the supplies for carrying on the war had been voted with much readiness and unanimity. Some of the items in the account are not devoid of interest in the present day. The number of seamen for the year 1703 was fixed at forty thousand, at which rate it was computed that the cost of the navy would be two millions two hundred thousand pounds. For the land service exact estimates were furnished, according to which the expense of maintaining the quota of forty thousand troops abroad would be eight hundred and thirty thousand pounds. Three hundred and fifty thousand pounds in addition were voted for the forces kept up for the defence of the country under the head of guards and garrisons, and seventy thousand pounds for the ordnance. The cost of both branches of the service thus reached an aggregate of about three millions and a half.‡

To meet these charges the principal item of revenue was the land-tax, which, at four shillings in the pound, might bring in about two millions. All the old taxes upon malt, cider, and coals were continued, and one additional tax was imposed, which must have been felt severely by the numerous class it affected. The salaries of all persons in public employments were made liable to a deduction of four shillings in the pound. The only exemption was in favour of military officers. The poorest clerk in the civil service had to contribute a fifth of his scanty income to the support of the war.§

The Commons, however, notwithstanding the large discrep-

* Burnet. He was among those who opposed the grant.

† This completed Anne's dislike for Sunderland. She attributed the success of the bill to the exertions of the Duke and Duchess.

‡ Luttrell; Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

§ Stat. 1, Anne 17.

ancy between expenditure and revenue which began to appear in the accounts, acceded readily to a proposition which had been made by the States-general for an augmentation of forces. That body had agreed to send an additional ten thousand troops into the field conditionally upon England contributing the same number.* One recommendation indeed the House thought proper to make in its reply to the royal message which communicated this proposition. It was matter of notoriety that a good deal of traffic was still carried on between Holland and France, and that the French king was even in the habit of sending remittances to his armies in Bavaria and Italy through the agency of Dutch merchants. This circumstance would now be regarded merely as an illustration of the impossibility of bringing the business relations between two great commercial countries to an entire cessation. It cannot be doubted that, but for the difficulty of the sea, the correspondence between the merchants of London and Paris would have been as active as that between the merchants of Paris and Amsterdam. A small necessary exchange of bills was, in truth, still kept up between the former. But for a secret traffic between Holland and France the facilities were great, and English merchants were naturally chagrined that their Dutch rivals should enjoy this advantage over them. It was perhaps therefore the pressure of the mercantile influence which induced the adoption of a clause recommending that the consent of her Majesty to the proposed augmentation of troops should be made conditional upon Holland ceasing all traffic with France.†

The remaining subjects which occupied the attention of Parliament during this session are of interest principally for the record they furnish of the struggle between parties at a critical period of English history. The attitude of the two Houses towards each other was becoming more and more hostile. Most of the Lords were still Whigs, ardently attached to the principles of the Revolution, vigilant for the interests of the Hanoverian successors appointed by the Act of Settlement, and determined to support those interests against all enemies.

* Parliamentary History; Lamberty; Lettres Historiques; Luttrell; Boyer.
† Boyer; Burnet. Nottingham discovered a correspondence between some English and French merchants.

With the supreme importance of their cause they were deeply penetrated. They considered that the exclusion of the Stuarts was necessary for the preservation of the national liberty and religion. If a Stuart returned to rule over England, he would return half a Frenchman and wholly a Papist, with a secret determination to force his religion upon his subjects, and not unwilling for the furtherance of that object to degrade his kingdom into a mere province of France. So vital was this point that it admitted of no compromise. In the opinion of most Whigs every man who had not constantly in his heart and on his tongue the provisions of the Act of Settlement was a Jacobite, an enemy to liberty and the Protestant religion. Indeed, upon this act, as a foundation, were built the remaining articles which composed the creed of a Whig of this period. He undertook the cause of the Dissenters not so much because he possessed more humanity or broader principles of Christianity than the Tories, as because he was anxious to retain the alliance of a numerous and influential body of men. He was a zealous supporter of the war with France principally because that war was directed against the resources of the king from whom the Pretender derived his strongest hopes of regaining the English throne. For in the imagination of a Whig Louis was for ever revolving some deep scheme for reinstating the guest whom he so ostentatiously patronised; and nothing therefore short of annihilating the power of the French monarch could insure the safety and independence of this country.

While a majority, though not a large majority, of the Lords were Whigs zealous even to bigotry, three-fourths of the members of the House of Commons were Tories. It will not now be disputed by any one who takes the trouble to examine the evidence as to public feeling in this age that the charge of Jacobitism which the Whigs brought wholesale against their adversaries had little foundation in fact. Indeed, the more closely this evidence is scrutinised, the more insignificant appears that party in England which was really desirous to see a restoration of the Stuarts. The Tories upon this subject appear to have been of every shade of opinion, from absolute Jacobites to men who had the cause of Hanover almost as much at heart as the Whigs. In truth, the proper bond of union

between the Tories was not, as in the case of the Whigs, political, but ecclesiastical. Upon the question of the future dynasty their sentiments differed widely, but they were unanimous for exalting the power of the Church and for excluding Dissenters from all influence in the state.

Between a House of Lords and a House of Commons, the majorities in which were so inimical to each other, it is not surprising that there should have arisen frequent grounds of altercation. The dispute concerning the bill for preventing occasional conformity dragged on through the whole session, and was supplemented by other disputes. The Commons sent up a bill extending the time for taking the oath for abjuring the Prince of Wales. The Whigs of the Upper House were instantly in arms. For the scruples which prevented a conscientious Tory from swearing that James was not his lawful sovereign, they felt no more respect or pity than the Tories could sympathize with the men who dissented from the teaching of the Established Church. To save appearances the bill, instead of being rejected, was returned with some ingenious amendments and additions which made it a measure twice as tyrannical as before; and in this shape the Commons, to avoid the imputation of being adverse to the Hanoverian succession, reluctantly passed it.*

Early in the session the commissioners who had been appointed to examine the public accounts laid the result of their investigation before the House. They had discovered, they stated, great misapplication of the public money in the accounts of the paymaster-general of the land forces. This functionary was the Earl of Ranelagh, an Irish peer, who had held his appointment since the time of James II. The looseness prevailing in the public offices makes it abundantly evident that few or no persons, through whose hands the revenue passed, had then much chance of escaping an unfavourable report if his accounts were examined by rigid or hostile scrutineers. Ranelagh's answer to the charge was not, however, deemed unsatisfactory by his friends. The utmost that could be proved against him was that he had, upon some occa-

* Stat. 1, Anne 21. Burnet says, "All people were surprised to see a bill that was begun in favour of the Jacobites turned so terribly upon them."

sions, been weak enough to surrender the funds entrusted to him for other uses than those for which they were designed, upon such insufficient authority as Privy Seal and Treasury orders. To propitiate his enemies the hunted man laid down his place, which was at once divided between two Tories, Howe, and Sir Stephen Fox. But the Commons could not at this moment afford to be merciful. They were then about to renew their attack upon a far more important and more obnoxious public servant than Ranelagh, whom they accused of similar delinquencies.*

Against no member of the Whig party was such a feeling of bitterness cherished by the Tories as against Halifax. Their signal failure in the preceding year to ruin that illustrious advocate of every doctrine which a Tory abhorred had only intensified their enmity. One of their first measures in the session had been to pass a vote that right had not been done the Commons in the impeachments which they had brought against some members of the Upper House. The more violent Tories were indeed goaded to fury by the thought that it should be in the power of the rival House to protect any one whom they had marked out for destruction. That Halifax was now in disfavour at Court, that he was without office, that he had been struck off the list of Privy Councillors, was undoubtedly something gained, but it was not enough. That the delinquent should be still at liberty and without a stain on his character, that he should be still influencing the Lords by his subtle and persuasive oratory to votes counteractive of the most cherished schemes of the Commons, was hard to bear. He was even now acting a leading part in the opposition to the Occasional Conformity Bill. The Tories therefore sought new occasion against Halifax, and speedily found it. The commissioners for public accounts, after a severe scrutiny into his duties as Auditor of the Exchequer, fancied that they had detected some irregularity in his method of performing them. They made their report to the House, and the House, after a slight examination, was but too glad to pass resolutions in accordance with the complaints the report contained. It was resolved that Halifax had neglected his duty, and had committed a breach of trust in

* Report of the Commissioners in the Parliamentary History; Burnet.

not transmitting the impressed rolls half-yearly to the Queen's Remembrancer according to the provisions of a recent act. This resolution it was decided to submit to her Majesty with a request that she would issue instructions to the Attorney-General to commence a prosecution. The Commons thought this a favourable moment for passing sentence on Ranelagh. He was expelled the House.*

With this request Anne promised compliance. It was fortunate for Halifax that there were persons more disposed to believe in his integrity than his sovereign. The Whig peers were little inclined to permit a valuable coadjutor, and as they were firmly convinced an innocent man, to undergo the risk and ignominy of a public trial without making an attempt to save him. A few days afterwards the Upper House took into consideration the report of the commissioners. Halifax was heard in his own defence, and a committee was appointed to investigate the charge made against him. It seems to have been a long-established usage that the Auditor of the Exchequer, instead of transmitting his impressed rolls half-yearly to the Remembrancer, should allow them to pass through the hands of an intermediate official named the Clerk of the Pells. In 1697, two years before Halifax entered upon his duties, an act passed for regulating the different offices of the Exchequer had simply prescribed that the Auditor should transmit his rolls to the Remembrancer; but the officials, not perhaps imagining that any change was really intended by the act, had continued the more circuitous routine sanctioned by usage. The charge against Halifax, therefore, amounted to nothing more than that, instead of transmitting his rolls directly to the Remembrancer, he had transmitted them indirectly through the Clerk of the Pells. These circumstances, having been reported by the committee to the House, the Lords passed a resolution that Halifax had performed the duties of his office, and had not been guilty of any neglect or breach of trust.

The Commons, irritated by these proceedings, demanded a conference, and the conference ended in an altercation. "Your lordships," said they, "have prejudged a case which is

* See the address of the Commons in the Parliamentary History; Burnet; Boyer.

under juridical consideration. You have passed a verdict of acquittal before any case has been laid before you. Had you waited, the accusation would have come before you in proper form, either originally by impeachment or by writ of error from the inferior courts. The only effect of such a resolution as that you have now passed can be to intimidate the judges and prepossess the jury." The Lords, not a little nettled by such language, passed several resolutions in their House on the following day. They vindicated their right to act as they had done, and the justice of their decision. They agreed, moreover, that the Commons had in the conference made use of expressions and arguments altogether unparliamentary, tending to destroy all good correspondence between the two Houses, and subversive of the constitution.

Another conference was demanded, this time at the instance of the Lords. But it was now high time for the Crown to interfere. The dispute was becoming serious, and who was to arbitrate between two independent and absolute powers, each of which was evidently determined to assert the gift of infallibility? Fortunately the Parliament had already completed the most necessary part of its labours. The bills of supply had been all passed. A royal message was therefore sent to both Houses urging them to despatch what business was in hand as quickly as possible. The conference, indeed, was suffered to take place, and Halifax himself appeared as one of the managers on behalf of the Lords; but it was unproductive of any good result. The one pleasing feature in the dispute was the anxiety shown by each party to justify itself in the eyes of the nation. Both the Lords and the Commons thought proper to publish their proceedings in relation to the public accounts.*

On the 27th of February the Parliament was prorogued with a speech from Anne, in which her strong leaning to the Tory party appeared through a thin veil of impartiality. She thanked the Commons for the liberal supplies they had voted towards the war, and for the provision they had made for her husband. Such of her subjects, she continued, as had the misfortune to dissent from the Church of England might rely upon

* Parliamentary History.

the Act of Toleration, which she was firmly resolved to maintain. Those, on the other hand, who had the happiness and advantage to belong to the Church, should consider that she had been brought up in its principles, and that for its preservation she had been willing to run great hazards. Such persons might rest assured that it would be always her particular care to encourage and maintain the Establishment, and every the least member of it, in all just rights and privileges, and that upon every occasion of promoting to any ecclesiastical dignity regard would be had to such ecclesiastics as were eminent for piety, learning, and zeal.*

At the same time that the Parliament separated, another assembly separated also—the convocation of the clergy of the province of Canterbury. The two Houses of which it was composed had been wrangling, in imitation of the two branches of the legislature, throughout the entire session. The clergy of the Lower House were priests of the old Conservative school, ambitious of power, haters of all who dissented from their teaching, and ever ready to indulge in a snarl at the memory of the impartial sovereign who had extended his protection to the oppressed. The Bishops, on the other hand, who formed the Upper House, had owed their sees to William, and had been expressly chosen from among those divines who looked favourably upon the Toleration, and whose leading desire it was, by kindness and a disposition to meet the Dissenters upon minor points of ritual or theology, to bring about a comprehension of all reasonable Christians within the pale of the Church. Between two Houses thus constituted there could be no harmony. The same question which had been hopelessly argued throughout the last convocation now appeared on the threshold of the present. The Upper House was positive that the sovereign alone had the right of assembling synods, that without the royal licence first obtained no vote or resolution which the Houses might pass was of any force whatever, and that the power of proroguing convocation resided in the Archbishop. The inferior clergy asserted a right to assemble whenever the Parliament did so. During the two years that the Church had been divided upon this point a constant fire of

* Parliamentary History.

treatises had been kept up on each side; and an amount of learning, ingenuity and invective had been exhibited by the reverend disputants very awful and edifying to bystanders. The most energetic pamphleteer in asserting the royal authority was William Wake, a Low Church divine of formidable erudition, who enjoyed the distinction of having broken a lance with Bossuet.* The champion of the High Church party of the Lower House was the elegant and accomplished Francis Atterbury. This clergyman had been during ten years the most popular preacher in town. The discourses which he delivered as lecturer of St. Bride's, remarkable for the exquisite polish of their style, and replete with a sober and chaste imagery, were then and are still considered models of ecclesiastical oratory. They were committed to memory, and were delivered with all the additional graces that a fine voice, a well-studied action, and a very handsome person can bestow. His book against Wake may have been more passionate than convincing; but Atterbury was the idol of his party, and his diligence had been rewarded by the Lower House of Convocation with a vote of thanks.†

The two Houses were violently influenced against each other, and neither House would abate an iota of its pretensions. The Lower at length proposed to refer the matters in dispute to a council to be appointed by the Queen, but this suggestion was ill-received by the Bishops. The power of proroguing convocation, the most important of their privileges, they were firmly determined to retain in their own hands. The rights of their order, they declared, were sacred trusts, which they would refer to the judgment of no one. As they had received them, so were they bound to transmit them to their successors. Independently of this reasoning, the Bishops might well be excused for declining to submit their pretensions to the decision of a body of men who would be but too surely selected from the party most hostile to them. The inferior clergy, foiled in this attempt, then appealed to the Queen, and besought her to

* The Biographia Britannica contains an account of the life and innumerable works of Wake, who became Bishop of Lincoln in 1705 and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1715.

† Memoirs and Correspondence of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, by F. Williams, 1869.

become arbitrator between the two Houses. Anne promised to look into the matter; the case was laid before the Privy Council; there was a search into the records, and the judges were consulted. It seems probable that their opinions were adverse to the claims of the Lower House, as their answers were never made public. When at length the Parliament separated, the convocation, after having spent above three months in wrangling, submitted to be prorogued by the Archbishop in the customary manner.*

An event took place towards the close of 1702 of more importance to the nation than these differences among its priesthood. The last committee which was destined to fail in the great object of arranging an union between England and Scotland met at the Cockpit on the 22nd of October. Twenty-three commissioners had been appointed on the part of England and the same number on the part of Scotland. The proceedings were opened by a speech of Sir Nathan Wright, the Lord Keeper, in which he expressed the hope of himself and his fellow commissioners that the purpose for which they were assembled might be happily effected, that the two kingdoms, already united in allegiance under one head, might be for ever thereafter so blended as to form one people, one in heart and mutual affection, one in name and deed. Queensberry responded by assuring the English of the sincere desire of himself and his colleagues to promote the great design, and of their readiness to accommodate any difficulties that might arise on fair and reasonable terms. But these fine speeches meant nothing. Most of the commissioners on both sides seem to have been firmly convinced that an union under existing circumstances was an impossibility, and that they were called together only to satisfy the clamour of a few men so ignorant or sanguine as to imagine that an arrangement might be possible. There was one obstacle to an union which, it was taken for granted, could not be surmounted. The subjects of each kingdom had their peculiar Church, to which they were attached with a devotion which impelled them to persecute every creature who would not enter its pale. That

* The Proceedings in Convocation are copiously related by Burnet. He intimates that the distinction between High and Low Churchmen arose at this time.

Englishmen would ever consent to the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, and to admit Presbyterians to office and power, was a state of things as unlikely to happen as that Presbyterian Scotland would consent that Episcopalians should share the honours and emoluments of the Scottish pulpit. And for this grand difficulty what provision had been made? The commission contained not a single delegate from either of the Churches. Was it to be supposed that lay statesmen would take upon themselves the responsibility of arranging a compromise on the subject of religion which, if disrelished by their countrymen, might lead to their being torn in pieces?

Under this impression that the difficulty about religion was as a mine beneath all negotiations, the commission proceeded but languidly to its work. The Scotch came up to London so leisurely that it was midwinter before a sufficient number of them had arrived. Thenceforth the complaints were that on the days of meeting there were often not enough Englishmen present to form a quorum. A few general propositions were, however, acceded to without dispute. It was agreed that the two kingdoms should be united in one monarchy to be called Great Britain, and that the succession to the crown of the united kingdom should be according to the limitations in the Act of Settlement. It was also agreed, though without entering upon any details, that both nations should be represented in a single Parliament. Then came on for consideration the trading privileges which the subjects of the respective kingdoms should enjoy, and the first signs of disagreement appeared. That there should be free trade between England and Scotland, that the duties upon exportation and importation should be the same for both countries, were propositions to which each set of commissioners was ready to assent. But the Scotch insisted upon carrying the principle of international equality so far as to throw open unconditionally to their countrymen the trade with those plantations which English enterprise had founded in every part of the world, and which had so largely enhanced the comforts, the luxury, and the opulence of the parent state. To this demand the English not unnaturally demurred. What had the Scotch to offer in return for such splendid advantages? Yet a little consideration determined them to give way upon

this point. Scotland had indeed no colonies to introduce as her portion in the marriage settlement; but her sons, as hardy and intrepid a race as any living, would form a valuable addition to the stock of seamen which was necessary for carrying on the enormously extended commerce of England. It would be some time, moreover, before she could grow rich enough to take much of a share in this jealously-guarded traffic, and the most valuable colony of England was, after all, protected by the charter granted to the East India Company. But the very mention of the word charter reopened an old feud. The Scotch, too, had their chartered company, which had been extorted from a careless Vicegerent of William, and which was licensed to carry on a trade with any ports in Asia, Africa, or America. Little capable as they had hitherto shown themselves to profit by the privileges of this company, they were determined not to forego them. The English insisted that the company should be dischartered. Two companies, they said, formed for carrying on an almost identical traffic could not co-exist in one kingdom. As neither side would give way upon this point, the negotiations came to a deadlock, and it was thought advisable that the commissioners should not continue to sit and inflame each other uselessly. The time was approaching when the Scotch statesmen now in London would be required in their own country. The commission was therefore adjourned by the royal authority.*

In truth, the English Government had, under the influence of necessity, come to a bold determination with respect to Scotland. Supplies were urgently needed from that kingdom, and there could be little doubt that if the old Parliament were reassembled they would be readily voted, but there were grave doubts whether the collectors would succeed in levying them. The general opinion of the country seemed to be that the Parliament was an illegal one. Many of the seceders from it had stoutly resisted the tax-gatherer, and had called upon their neighbours to follow their example.† It was therefore necessary to dissolve this assembly, upon which some reliance could be placed, and to run the hazard of a new election.

* Boyer; Defoe's History of the Union.

† Boyer. Lockhart declares that near one-half of the nation refused to pay the taxes voted by the mutilated Parliament.

In what manner the influence of the Crown should be exerted so as to insure a majority in the following Parliament was now a question of supreme importance to the advisers of her Majesty. With the ramifications of public opinion in Scotland the English Ministers had naturally but little acquaintance, and it was by no means safe to place much reliance upon the advice of any one Scotchman, for feuds and jealousies ran so high in the North as almost to preclude the possibility of any disinterested advice being given. It was known in general that parties were split up into many fragments. There were Presbyterians who thought of nothing but the security and exaltation of the Kirk; there were other Presbyterians, whose politics were almost identical with those of the English Whigs; and there was a third division of Presbyterians, holding in the main with the revolutionary doctrines, but whose temper had been so soured by what they considered the grievances of their country as to render it doubtful which way their votes would go upon any international question. Then there was the party of Episcopalians, and a party labouring for the restoration of James. Had Godolphin and his colleagues possessed that knowledge which any student may now acquire of the comparative strength of parties, the wisdom would probably have been apparent of throwing everything into the hands of the Presbyterians as incomparably the more powerful faction of the kingdom. It would have been no difficult task to unite this body, and by a few reasonable concessions to have secured its attachment to the English Government. But it reflects little discredit upon statesmen that, with only wretched materials before them for forming a judgment, they should have come to a wrong conclusion. The Episcopalians and Jacobites, though far less numerous than the Presbyterians, were twice as active and clamorous. They were thought to be much stronger than they really were, and there was, moreover, a leaning in the breast of Anne and of the Tories who formed her Council in favour of a party whose relations towards the Presbyterians they regarded as analogous to their own relations in respect of the Whigs.*

* For the state of parties in Scotland see Lockhart's Memoirs; Somerville's History of Reign of Queen Anne; Wright's History of Scotland; Burnet and

The English Council under these circumstances adopted the perilous and not altogether honest course of attempting to please all parties. Some modifications were made in the Scottish Ministry and Council which, it was thought, would be borne by the Presbyterians without discontent, while they would be sufficient to encourage those hopes which the Episcopalians and Jacobites had formed of the favourable inclinations towards them of the Queen. High expectations were founded on the abilities for intrigue of the very clever and insinuating Earl of Seafield, who was now made Chancellor of Scotland. This man had commenced his public career as a Jacobite: he had then veered round to the Government, and had risen to be one of the secretaries of state, but, strange to say, had never entirely lost the confidence of his early associates. The Jacobites of Scotland, like their brethren in England, were ever prone to believe in the fidelity of a man who, whatever his public conduct might be, was always willing to see a friend of the good cause in private, to listen gravely to the simple and often absurd schemes that would then be unfolded to him, to make vague promises that engaged him to nothing, and to protest that the only sovereign whom his heart acknowledged was the Prince beyond the water. The friends of Seafield good-naturedly found excuses for his tergiversation. He was a poor man, compelled to earn his bread as an advocate: if he had refused to take the oaths he must have starved: he had therefore sworn allegiance to the usurper; but when the proper moment came, he would be found as true as steel to his lawful king.* The English Ministers, on the other hand, placed a much better founded reliance on Seafield's fidelity to his own interests, and upon his being sagacious enough to comprehend that to render himself useful to the actual Government was his surest means of keeping in office.

The Episcopalians and Jacobites, already firmly convinced that a counter-revolution was preparing at Court, were raised to the summit of joy when a Minister, fresh from London and the

Boyer. It must be always borne in mind that a notion that the Queen was secretly desirous to secure the succession of her brother was irremovably fixed in the Scottish intellect. It was useless for the Queen to protest to the contrary.

* Lockhart's Memoirs.

presence of the Queen, came down to give them secret assurances that her Majesty's inclinations in their favour were as strong as could possibly be desired. Perhaps to give some tone to Seafield's assurances, an amnesty was at this time proclaimed at Edinburgh for all persons convicted of treason during the previous reign; and many Scottish gentlemen, who had grown weary of hanging about the Pretender, or of roaming from one country to another, took advantage of this act of grace, and returned home.* The Episcopalians and Jacobites, so lately hostile to the Government, went to the poll in a fever of loyalty. So great indeed appears to have been the influence obtained over them by the agents of the Court, that in several instances candidates of their own party were put aside, and Presbyterians elected to comply with the supposed wishes of her Majesty.†

On the 6th of May the people of Edinburgh witnessed for the last time the imposing ceremony which was termed the riding of the Parliament. The streets between Holyrood and the Parliament House were lined with cavalry and infantry, and along the avenue they formed the members passed two by two on horseback. Next after the trumpeters and pursuivants, came the sixty-three Commissioners of Burghs, each individual attended by a single lackey on foot. They were succeeded by the seventy-seven Commissioners of Shires, whose superior dignity was marked by their being each attended by two lackeys. Then appeared the nobility in their robes. The train of each personage was borne by a gentleman, and each was followed by three or more lackeys, according to his rank, in liveries emblazoned with the arms of their master. This glittering procession preceded the emblems of royalty, the sword of state carried by the Earl of Mar, the sceptre by the Earl of Crawford, the crown by the Earl of Forfar in the place of the Earl of Douglas, and the purse by the Earl of Morton. Queensberry, as High Commissioner, came next, attended by a gorgeous retinue of footmen and pages, and the Duke of Argyle brought up the rear at the head of the horseguards.‡

The result of a very few sittings, after the Parliament had

* Lettres Historiques. † Lockhart.
‡ Wright's History of Scotland.

settled down to business, was such as to convince Queensberry that the Government had, in its intrigues to secure a majority, perpetrated a grave and perhaps irrecoverable blunder. The Episcopalians and Jacobites, the Cavaliers as they insisted upon styling themselves, were indeed as subservient as could be desired, and they were in more than usual numbers. But their strength was as nothing when compared with the mass of the Presbyterians; and it was soon apparent that nearly the whole of this formidable party had been disgusted and alienated by the efforts the Government had made to conciliate their political and religious rivals. The manner in which some members of the Dissenting clergy had been recently conducting themselves had powerfully increased the feelings of rage and alarm which filled the breasts of the zealous followers of the Kirk. Since the commencement of the reign there had been an unusual breaking out of meeting-houses in the great cities. A few venturesome Episcopalians had even returned to their old manses, had attempted to resume their duties, had mounted the pulpit, and preached in defiance of the law which condemned them to silence. Such boldness, it may not be unreasonable to infer, would not have been displayed by men lying under so heavy a ban of public opinion, without some secret understanding with the supreme authorities, and suspicions of this kind had engendered a very prevalent hatred and distrust of the Ministry. The feelings of the majority of the Parliament soon found vent. The Bill of Supply was brought forward by a Jacobite, the Earl of Home. A counter overture was at once presented by the Marquis of Tweeddale, that the Parliament would, before taking any other business into consideration, proceed to settle the government after the decease of her Majesty.*

The Ministers and their friends strove hard to carry a first reading of the Bill of Supply. But it was in vain that Queensberry pressed the matter from the throne, and assured the House that, if this point were conceded, ample time should be allowed for discussing any other business. The malcontents were in no mood to put faith in any such promises. There was a fierce debate, which was protracted through two long sittings.

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Lockhart; Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Burnet.

The speaker who most distinguished himself was Fletcher of Saltoun.* He was the chief of a party whose cardinal maxim it was that all the misfortunes of Scotland arose from her subjection to foreign sovereigns, and to the corrupt counsellors by whom they were swayed. Was it so sure, he sneeringly asked, that his Grace would be able to fulfil those promises of which he was so lavish? Would it be an event altogether unprecedented, if the Parliament, after voting the supply, should be immediately afterwards adjourned in obedience to instructions from the English Lord Treasurer, in spite of all engagements to the contrary? In the face of an opposition so powerful and so determined, the Ministers perceived at length the prudence of giving way, and a resolution was carried that the Parliament would, before considering the supply, or any other business, proceed to pass such acts as were necessary for securing the liberty, religion, and trade of the country.†

Several bills, all conceived in a spirit of hostility to England, and all seeking to impose limitations upon the authority of English sovereigns in Scotland, were at once brought forward, and were ordered to lie on the table. The preference was at the next sitting given to a bill presented by the Earl of Marchmont for securing the true Protestant religion and Presbyterian government. All the fanatics of the House had just been wrought up to considerable fury by a foolish attempt made by the Earl of Strathmore to obtain a toleration for Episcopalians, and by the reading of a highly-seasoned memorial from the General Assembly of the Scottish clergy upon the subject.‡ To enact a toleration, this venerable and pious body asserted, for the followers of prelatical principles, was nothing less than to establish iniquity by law. The awful guilt of such a measure would surely draw down the vengeance of heaven

* The character of this honest fanatic is one of the most favourably drawn by Lockhart. But the reason why the Jacobite was so lenient to the Republican was, because Fletcher bore so intense a hatred to the English rule that it was thought he would side with the Pretender out of mere spite to the dominant country.

† Lockhart; *Lettres Historiques*; Boyer.

‡ This body had recently disputed the power of the sovereign to adjourn their assembly. The civil power, they asserted, had no authority over them in affairs ecclesiastical, "Une résolution," says the writer of the Lettres Historiques, "qui a été trouvée violente et insoutenable."

upon the promoters of it, and upon their families. In their zeal against Episcopacy, the Presbyterians went a step further. An act was presented by Argyle for ratifying all the proceedings of the Convention of 1689, and for making it high treason to impugn, or endeavour by writing or speech to alter, the Claim of Right. As one of the articles of the Claim denounced Episcopacy as an insupportable grievance of the nation, it followed that any Episcopalian who thereafter stood up for his religion would do so at the peril of his life. A few careless words dropped in the heat of a theological dispute would constitute the speaker a traitor, and might lead to his being dragged off to prison and a scaffold. There was a stiff resistance to this brutal enactment. But it was vain to argue with a crowd inflamed by jealousy and tortured with apprehensions for the safety of the popular ritual. The bill was carried by a large majority.*

Presbytery having been secured by these formidable barriers, the House passed to the consideration of another subject, upon which the feelings of Scotchmen were scarcely less excited than upon the subject of religion. The wealth of Englishmen, the comforts and luxuries of English homes, had long been viewed with envy and repining by northern politicians. How, it was asked, could Scotland have sunk to the distressed condition in which she now was, the houses even of her great nobles almost bare of furniture, the mass of her people going in rags and barefoot, except through the unkindness, the neglect, the actual oppression with which she was treated by a powerful neighbour? Since the day when her sovereign departed for England, had she been for a moment an independent kingdom? Had she not been constantly governed by English Ministers, whose object it was to keep her poor, in order to debar her from all commercial competition with their own countrymen? That these complaints were justified by the facts few persons would now deny. James I. had, from the time of fixing his seat in London, become of necessity an English sovereign. He was unavoidably compelled to rule in accordance with the

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Lockhart; Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Burnet. William had constantly declared he would never give his assent to a bill of this persecuting nature.

wishes of the more powerful nation. Had he shown too marked a predilection for his northern subjects, had he striven to procure for them a share in the commercial advantages enjoyed by England, he would have put his throne in danger. But, in point of fact, neither James nor his descendants seem ever to have entertained even a wish to improve the condition of Scotland. They had but one desire in reference to this, their native country, and that was to force upon the people hated Episcopalian institutions.

In 1696 the Scotch made their first venture in trade. It was unsuccessful; and those who lost their money by it chose to attribute the failure to any cause rather than to their own want of experience and judgment. The King, guided of course by English advisers, had refused his countenance to the expedition to Darien, and the scheme had consequently collapsed. It must be remembered that the Scotch before the union, although subject to the same sovereign as the English, were in every other respect as completely foreigners to the English as the French or Dutch. It was unreasonable that they should have expected assistance in establishing a trade which was to rival and eclipse that of England; and yet because England did not employ all her might in their cause, they were filled with bitterness. But the Scotch on this subject were in too angry a frame of mind to listen to reason. That an union, such as would put Scotland on terms of fair equality with England, could ever be adjusted, seemed to them an event as unlikely to happen as it seemed to the generality of Englishmen. There was then but one cure for the evils and grievances under which their country laboured, and that was that the country should resume its independence.

It was under the influence of such feelings that the Parliament now proceeded to take into consideration an act for the security of the kingdom, which had been presented by the Marquis of Athol. Its first draught proposed little more than to enact that the Estates of the realm should assemble within twenty days after the decease of her Majesty, and should proceed to nominate a successor of the Protestant religion; but this foundation the patriots of the House thought broad enough for the erection of a scheme of liberty. Day after day the act

was taken into consideration, and numerous additions were made to it. One clause excluded all Papists from Parliament: another excluded all Englishmen possessed of Scotch titles, who did not derive an annual income of £1,000 from within the kingdom. A strong party, headed probably by Fletcher, was for seizing the occasion to settle what limitations should be imposed upon the successor. Many causes, it was contended, might arise in the future, to preclude all deliberation on the subject. The country might be engaged in an unprosperous war, or a prey to civil commotions; and in such cases the Estates would be in too great a hurry to fill the throne to stay for imposing any limitations at all. It was not without considerable difficulty that the Ministers prevailed upon the majority to forego this labour. They seem, however, to have at length convinced the more reasonable members of the assembly that, by inserting in the act clauses to which her Majesty, having a just regard to the rights of her successor, could not possibly consent, they ran a strong risk of losing all its other provisions. What Fletcher's limitations would have been we are not without means of judging. He would have had an annually elected Parliament, in which all voting was to be done by ballot. Every post in the kingdom, civil or military, and every pension was to be conferred by this Parliament. Without its consent the sovereign was to be disabled from making peace or war, to conclude a treaty with any foreign state, or to keep up a single regiment of soldiers; and if he attempted to break through any of these conditions, he was to forfeit the crown. "I am aware," said Fletcher, coolly addressing the assembly, "that some of you are for the House of Hanover, and some for the Prince at St. Germains. To me this matter is perfectly indifferent; and as you may wish to designate the successor, I have left a blank space in my bill, which you may fill up with his name. I confess I had rather see the crown in the possession of a Papist if my limitations are adopted, than of the best possible Protestant, if they are not." It would seem that Fletcher's retaining the kingly dignity at all in his scheme of government was only a concession to the incurable folly of his countrymen. If they would be slaves, if they must have some puppet to which they might cringe and bow the

knee, a puppet after his modelling might be worshipped with the least risk of evil results.*

The Ministers succeeded likewise in procuring the rejection of a clause proposing to substitute for the words "a successor of the Protestant religion," the words "a successor of the true Protestant religion, as by law established within this kingdom," a clause avowedly designed to exclude from the throne the Lutheran family of Hanover. But the patriots, although foiled in this attempt to separate the two crowns, pertinaciously continued the attack. The Earl of Roxburgh, a young and high-spirited nobleman, brought forward at the next sitting a clause to preclude the Estates from naming as successor to the crown of Scotland the same person who was successor to the crown of England, unless such conditions had been previously arranged as would secure the independence, religion, liberty, and trade of the nation from English or foreign influence. To escape a division upon this question the Chancellor saw no better remedy than to adjourn the House. There was a tremendous uproar when the words passed his lips. Cries of "liberty of speech" and "privilege" resounded from all parts of the assembly. Every one seems to have imagined that the Parliament would never meet again, that there would be a prorogation before the next sitting. That night there was a large meeting of discontented members; and an address to her Majesty protesting against the adjournment as an infraction of the Claim of Rights was framed and signed by nearly eighty persons.†

The situation of Queensberry and his colleagues was now embarrassing in the extreme. For three months had they been waiting in the hope that passions would cool down, and that the Parliament would then suffer itself to be coaxed by gracious words and artful promises into a first reading of the Act of Supply. Yet the general discontent, instead of allaying itself, had grown more vehement than ever. The Commissioner had not been wanting to himself in his difficulties. In the art of confirming friends and disarming enemies the graceful Queensberry was allowed to have no superior; but the fascination of

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Lockhart; The Political Works of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun.

† Lockhart; Boyer; Wright.

his manners had for the time lost its effect. It was in vain that he closeted himself alternately with Presbyterian and with Cavalier chiefs. Suspicion as to the designs of the Government had obtained too firm a hold on the minds of the former to be dissipated by mere assurances, while the Episcopalians and Jacobites were in a rage at the delay of Ministers in performing those promises which had been secretly held out to them. In fact the advisers of Anne had, through wrong information as to the comparative strength of parties, committed an error which could not now be retrieved. They had by their endeavours to conciliate a minority disgusted three-fourths of the House; and even this minority was joining the Opposition from a conviction that they had been betrayed, or that the Ministers had promised more than they had the power to perform.

Nothing remained therefore for Queensberry and his colleagues except to face a whole House of malcontents. They tried to thin the ranks of the Opposition by exhausting the patience of the country members. The sittings were made short and the intervals between them long under a variety of pretexts. But the dissatisfied lairds, although longing to get back to their fields and their farms in time for the harvest, and venting many a groan over the high prices of Edinburgh, had their hearts in the struggle to extinguish English influence in Scotland, and remained manfully at their posts.* Then the Ministers, abandoning for the moment the main point of the supply, brought forward a measure which, it was hoped, would be received with more favour. In 1700 the Parliament had, under the pretence that Scotchmen had grown too poor to indulge in such luxuries as wine, but with the real object of annoying the sovereign, passed a bill prohibiting the importation of French liquors, and the effect of this had been to diminish by nearly one-half the scanty revenues of the Scottish crown. The Ministers now succeeded, in spite of much derisive comment from the patriots, in inducing the House to recall this stroke of legislation. One gentleman referred to the customs as providing a convenient fund for buying up votes. Another praised the old system of letting out the customs to farm, because they then produced a certain ascertained sum.

* Lockhart.

Now, he said, that they are collected by the royal burghs, it is impossible to tell how the accounts are huddled up with the Treasury, and how much is employed in the purpose of corruption.*

Meanwhile the Act of Security had been, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Ministers, put to the vote and carried by a large majority. Queensberry was much pressed to give it the royal assent, and was plainly told that if he complied with the general wish in this respect he would find no further difficulty in the matter of the supply.† The sovereign, it was argued, had no legal right to reject any bill presented by the Parliament. There had been no instance of any such rejection before 1660. The practice had arisen only during the arbitrary government of the last half century. But the Commissioner, pending the receipt of further instructions from England, remained prudently deaf to argument and entreaty. At length he spoke. He was empowered, he said, to give her Majesty's assent to every act which had been passed, except to the Act of Security. An explosion of grief and rage followed this disappointment. Amid some vehement harangues about the treacherous and designing men who had the disposition of Scottish affairs, it was moved that, since this act was lost, the act which had been formerly presented by Fletcher should be taken into consideration. That patriot, in high delight at the proposal, immediately sprang to his feet and defended his scheme of government in a long and elaborate oration. It was not a republic, he said, that he wished to establish. In fact, his plan was not so original as had been supposed. The oldest monarchy in the world, that of China, had existed for countless ages under much the same conditions as those he wished to apply to Scotland. Queensberry, unable to conceive that nonsense of this kind could be regarded with favour by the assembly, now ventured to remind the House that it had sat for nearly four months without voting anything towards the support of the army, and entreated that the Bill of Supply might be allowed at least a first reading. But the ranks of the Opposition, which had been slightly loosened by Fletcher's absurdity, closed up again at the suggestion of supplying the Government with

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Lockhart. † Lockhart.

funds. "Shall we proceed upon overtures for subsidy, or upon overtures for liberty?" shouted one enthusiastic patriot, and the cry was at once taken up by the whole assembly. Queensberry refused to allow the vote to be taken in this fashion, and the wrath of the malcontents then reached its climax. In the midst of the uproar the voice of Roxburgh was heard exclaiming that, if the Parliament were denied its undoubted privileges, it would demand them sword in hand. The Ministers, trembling for their personal safety, thought it at length expedient to feign compliance with the popular wishes. Queensberry gave a promise that members should be permitted at their next sitting to proceed on overtures for liberty, and hastily adjourned the House.*

But by the following morning he had determined upon a course which, under the circumstances, was probably the best which was now open to him. He saw that, for the chance of obtaining the little money which it was in the power of the Scottish Parliament to grant, he was exposing not only his own person and the persons of his colleagues, but even the royal authority, to considerable risks. The streets of Edinburgh were filled day and night by an angry crowd, which had caught the infection of patriotism, and which was only prevented from wreaking its fury upon those Ministers whom rumour asserted to be sold to England by troops of soldiers disposed in various parts of the city. On the 6th of September, therefore, without affording time to members to proceed to business, he sent for those acts which he had been empowered to pass, touched them with the sceptre, and with a few civil words prorogued the Parliament. During the next few days he and his colleagues, in the fear of being assaulted if they made their appearance abroad, remained shut up in their houses. But the popular fury gradually wore itself out. The country members, anxious to return to their corn-fields and their farms, soon dispersed, and Edinburgh was again left to its accustomed tranquillity.†

The Ministers, as soon as they dared leave their homes,

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Works of Fletcher; Lockhart.

† Lockhart; Boyer. This session presented a scene of confusion such as was never equalled by the English Parliament at any period of its annals. According to the Lettres Historiques, Lord Belhaven and Sir Alexander Ogilvy actually proceeded to blows.

hurried up, after their usual fashion, to London, for the purpose of hanging about the levées of those English statesmen in whose hands rested the power of retaining or dismissing them. It ought not to have escaped the observation of Godolphin and Marlborough, who were now in exclusive possession of the royal confidence, that the unsatisfactory state of Scotland arose entirely from the manner, sometimes cruelly oppressive, and at all times neglectful and contemptuous, in which she had been for a hundred years ruled by England. Indeed, the first feeling in the mind of any one who considers the relations between the two countries during the seventeenth century is one of wonder that a nation so energetic and so high-spirited as the Scotch could have borne so long and so patiently a state of servitude. The wonder ceases, however, when we consider the paltry and venal characters of a large portion of the Scottish nobility. From the accession of James there had been never wanting men of the highest rank and of immense influence who were willing for the sake of the salaries attached to office to betray their country, or, in other words, to govern it according to the bidding of English Ministers. The proceedings of the Parliament of 1703 should have rendered it evident that the awakening of all Scotland to her degradation had come at last. But so little did English statesmen comprehend the true position of affairs, that the impression on the mind of Godolphin seems to have been, not that Scotland was an unhappy and injured country, and that unless such concessions were accorded to her as would insure her future prosperity he would soon have to put down a rebellion, but that something had gone amiss with her leading men, which could be set right by bestowing among them a few titles and a pension or two. Soon after the return of Queensberry to London several noblemen, who showed no averseness to be bought by England, were exalted a degree in rank, and several gentlemen were raised to the peerage.

Five days after Queensberry prorogued the Parliament of Scotland, Ormond opened at Dublin the Parliament of Ireland. The willingness to submit to the direction of England, the nervous desire to stand well in the opinions of Englishmen felt by that anxious band of Protestants which took upon itself to

represent the Commons of Ireland, contrasted very singularly with the spirit of the freeborn legislators who had been thundering for six months against the tyranny of England in the Parliament of Scotland. Ormond was welcomed to the shores of his native country with transports of affection. Loyal addresses were voted to him by both Houses; he was requested to forward to her Majesty other addresses framed in a similar spirit, and a supply of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds was granted with alacrity towards the support of the Government.*

The colonists of Ireland were nevertheless suffering under grievances upon which it was impossible to be silent. The act which had passed the English Parliament in 1700 for resuming the grants of William, and for vesting in trustees all the estates forfeited since the Revolution, had been turned into an engine of scandalous oppression. These trustees, armed with unlimited powers, had been for the space of two years harrying the country like Spanish inquisitors. To determine what estates had a dozen years before become forfeited by the acts of their owners was the duty entrusted to them; a duty which, had they been disposed to perform it with impartiality, could not have failed to lead them into occasional injustice, through the difficulty of deciding in cases of conflicting evidence. But the English Commons had, in the heat of their resentment against the King, selected the trustees principally from those extreme members of the Tory party, which bore to Whigs and Williamites an animosity far more bitter than that which they bore to Catholics and Jacobites; and to these political zealots was it left to adjudicate upon the acts and conduct of every landowner in the country. Many Protestant gentlemen who had in the hour of trial given their hearty support to the prince whom they revered as the saviour of their property and their religion, had been thunderstruck to find themselves called upon to defend their character against accusations brought by lying informers in the courts of prejudiced judges. But this was not the only grievance. The country was threatened with an aggravation of that evil which has always been regarded as

* Lists of the Lords and Commons and votes of the House of Commons of the Parliament of Ireland, London, 1703; Burnet.

foremost among the sources of Irish misery. There were now on sale by the trustees some five hundred thousand acres of forfeited estates. That a sufficient number of purchasers could be found among the gentry of Ireland was out of the question; nor was it probable that any person of means would be tempted to give up the comforts and security of an English home to live among filthy and brutal savages, by whom, should he happen to displease them by demanding his rent, he would be killed with as little compunction as a rat. What was to be apprehended, therefore, was that the estates would be bought by capitalists, who, without venturing their persons in the country, would draw their rents through the odious grinding middleman. One immense estate had in fact been sold already to a party of Londoners, who had managed to incorporate themselves by buying up the charter of the Sword-blade company.*

The Commons now drew up a representation of the condition of Ireland, which they requested the Lord-Lieutenant to transmit to Anne. Bitter complaints were made of the conduct of the trustees. The charges, it was asserted, to which gentlemen had been unnecessarily put in defending their titles, exceeded all the cash then current in the kingdom. Then there was a long lamentation over the scarcity of money, the decay of trade, the closing of manufactories, and the increase of Protestant paupers. Three remedies for these evils were suggested. Parliaments should be held more frequently; persons holding public employments should be compelled to reside in the country; and, above all, there should be a stricter and closer union with England.†

That a governing minority composed of such strenuous Protestants should separate without adding to the laws already in force against the Roman Catholics, was not to be expected. The act which was this session framed for preventing the growth of Popery has the reputation of being the most energetic of all the measures devised by Anglo-Saxon ingenuity for ridding the land of this spiritual pestilence. The English Parliament had, in 1699, given birth to an enactment of no gentle nature. It had established that any person educated in the Popish religion

* Burnet; Wright's History of Ireland.
† Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Wright.

who should, within six months after attaining the age of eighteen, refuse to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy and conform to the provisions of the Test Act, should be rendered incapable of taking any estate either by descent or purchase, and that the estate should pass to the Protestant next of kin. It is a striking instance of the opinions entertained even by the most tolerant Englishmen of that age as to the expedience of eradicating the Roman Catholic faith from our soil, that this harsh law met with the cordial approval of a mind so benevolent as Burnet's. The Papists were, he considered, a sect incompatible with the peace and security of the nation; and the plan for getting rid of them was open to as few objections as a measure necessarily severe could be. It molested no man in actual possession of an estate, and it gave him ample time to make his arrangements for the future. A father, forewarned that he could not in this country save his child from beggary, might sell his property, and depart to some other country.* There was, however, at least one defect in the act. The legislators, presuming too much on the cupidity of human nature, had not taken into consideration that the Protestant next of kin might be too high-minded to claim his advantage; and in case he did not so claim, there was no provision that his right should pass to a Protestant of kin more remote.

But the Irish act far outstripped the English both in ferocity and cunning. In truth, it stopped short only at the point of direct confiscation of the estates of Roman Catholics. A Popish father who possessed a Protestant heir was rendered incapable of defeating the expectations of that heir, even if the estate had been purchased with his own money. He was furthermore deprived of the power of selling or mortgaging, or charging the estate with portions for younger children. Any child of his, however tender its years, if it could be coaxed into declaring itself a Protestant, was at once withdrawn from his guardianship, and placed with its nearest Protestant relation. If his heirs were all Papists the estate was to descend upon them in equal portions, a simple means for reducing the importance of a wealthy Roman Catholic family in a generation or two by excluding it from the custom of primogeniture.†

* See his remarks on this and the English bill.

† The statutes of Ireland at large.

This monstrous act was presented to Ormond by a deputation of the whole House of Commons. What had induced members, said the Speaker, to lay it before him in this solemn manner, was the apprehension in which they stood that there would be opposition to its ratification. The Papists, they had heard, were raising great sums to be employed in making friends in England. Ormond promised, and perhaps with sincerity, to do his best for the bill; but the tone which the Commons had contracted was little to his taste. The Whig-like vehemence with which they were hunting down Papists and Jacobites could not accord with the feelings of a Tory; and he knew well that it would be exceedingly offensive to the ruling powers at home. Three days after the presentation of the bill against Popery the House, moved to a high pitch of wrath by some riots which had been excited or fomented by Roman Catholics at Limerick, came to a resolution that the Papists of Ireland still retained hopes of the coming in of the Prince of Wales. This display of temper appears to have decided Ormond. On the same day he sent to the Parliament a message, commanding it to adjourn for six weeks.*

* Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Burnet. The Bishop remarks that "the bill was warmly opposed (in England) by those who had a mind to share in the presents that were ready to be made." It is to be hoped that this sweeping imputation of corruption was simply malicious. Burnet was very angry that any opposition should be made to so good a bill.

CHAPTER V.

Louis had, during the few months of intermission afforded him by the winter, laboured with all his old energy at the formation of his armies. To find recruits was becoming already a study not devoid of difficulty; for the constant drain kept up by half a century of nearly continual warfare upon the agricultural and industrious classes had so far diminished these sources of supply as to render some precaution necessary in further trenching upon them. But the vigour shown by the Allies in the past campaign had fully roused Louis to the risks he was incurring upon every frontier. Towards the close of 1702, therefore, he issued commissions for raising troops all over the kingdom; and with such activity were his orders carried out, that the sanguine monarch was soon enabled to boast that, although in the last campaign his enemies had made war upon him, in the next he would make war upon his enemies.* Before spring had set in eighteen newly-raised regiments were on the road to reinforce the armies of the Netherlands and Germany. The ranks were filling rapidly in nearly a hundred more. Villeroi, for whom the King cherished such misplaced and such ill-starred esteem, had been liberated by the Emperor after undergoing nine months of captivity at Inspruck. However freely the military critics of the court might discuss among themselves the value of a general who could allow himself to be surprised in the heart of a large fortified city, and to be dragged away prisoner by an enemy whom he imagined was at a distance of fifty miles from him, no one within the hearing of Villeroi's august friend ventured to breathe a word of disparagement.† But the

* Lettres Historiques.

† St. Simon. "Rien n'est égal," he says, "à la manière dont le roi le reçut et le traita."

monarch divined what was passing in the minds of his courtiers, and as if to show his contempt of their opinions, he now chose to associate Villeroi with Boufflers in the command of the splendid army which was to reassert the superiority of France in the Netherlands. It consisted of not less than a hundred and twenty thousand men. Villars was to make another attempt to penetrate into Germany and to join the Elector of Bavaria with about thirty-five thousand more. The Marquis de Tallard, one of a batch of ten recently-created marshals, but a gentleman more fitted for diplomacy than war, was appointed to succeed Villars in the command of the troops on the Rhine.* It was also in contemplation to send reinforcements to Italy when the more pressing requirements in other quarters had been satisfied.

From Italy, in fact, the French king had the most satisfactory intelligence. Vendôme had been throughout the winter steadily gaining ground upon the Imperialists, and had now cooped up the wasted forces of Eugene in some marshes on the banks of the Po. The Prince, finding his entreaties for assistance at the Imperial court met with nothing but evasions, had at length handed over his command to a lieutenant, and had repaired to Vienna to press for reinforcements in person. There, however, he found the Ministers absorbed by difficulties which to a great extent shut out his own miseries from consideration. The whole Empire, it seemed, had been thrown into a state of paralysis by the unexpected proceedings of the Elector and the dread of a French invasion. None of the circles would spare a man. Swabia and Franconia indeed had given formal notice that, unless help were speedily sent, they would be forced to accept conditions of neutrality. How with a bankrupt treasury and ruined credit to find soldiers to put down internal revolt and to keep back that avalanche of Frenchmen which was daily expected, was the problem which the Imperial ministers were now, in their accustomed deliberate and solemn manner, endeavouring to solve.†

With every expectation, therefore, that Vendôme would speedily bring the war to a close in Italy, with not unreason-

* See the character of Tabard in St. Simon.
† Lettres Historiques.

able anticipations of the effect which would be produced in Germany by a junction of the Elector and Villars, and with an army in the Netherlands which, when posted behind the most scientifically constructed lines of defence in Europe, might be securely counted upon to hold the country against any force the Allies could bring to the attack, Louis was certainly justified in conceiving sanguine hopes of the forthcoming campaign. He had, indeed, one drawback to his many causes of congratulation. An insurrection had broken out early in the preceding summer among the Protestants inhabiting the bleak and rugged chain of hills called the Cevennes. The insurrection was of no great extent, but vexatious at such a time, not only because it precluded his agents from raising soldiers in the large and populous province of Languedoc, but also because it compelled him to send to the district some ten thousand troops who could be ill spared from the protection of the frontier. It appears to have been entirely provoked by the savage cruelty of the Sieur de Baville, governor of the district. In character this man bore no inconsiderable resemblance to Louis himself. He was energetic and aspiring, determined upon bending and breaking the spirits of all beneath him, and without an atom of sympathy for the heroism of the poor creatures who, rather than abandon the religion of their fathers, endured all the tortures that his horrible dragoons and his still more horrible monks could inflict upon them. His motive in torturing and destroying the persons of the peasantry, and in burning their cottages and barns, was very different from that which had prompted such persecutors for religion as Ximenes or the Emperor Ferdinand II. to similar acts. He did not believe that, if he could extort a confession of error, he would have rescued a soul from the power of Satan. No man was more alive than he to the worthlessness of a conversion wrung from bodily suffering. The seat of religion, to use his own expression, was in the heart; and it was from thence that errors must be expelled. But the mere fact that a herd of lowborn, uneducated men and women should presume to set up their consciences in opposition to the King's command and his own, made him wild with rage.*

* St. Simon; Histoire des Camisards, 1754; Mémoires de Villars.

Goaded to despair by repeated and frightful acts of cruelty, a handful of peasants living among the Cevennes mountains at length shook off the meek resignation with which they, in common with all the Protestants of France, had hitherto submitted to their oppressors, armed themselves with their flails and reaping-hooks, and began to make reprisals upon the Catholics. The numbers of the insurgents increased with alarming rapidity. Bands of desperate men were soon roaming about the country, burning the churches, and sometimes, in retaliation for their own preachers, who, when caught, were invariably broken alive on the wheel, hanging a priest. The military force of the province proved itself inadequate to put down the insurrection. The insurgents—Camisards, as they were termed from the smock which they usually wore—retired to their fastnesses, impervious woods and caverns in the sides of mountains, in which it was no safe matter to attack them. Again and again these peasants, armed with nothing better than clubs and scythes, but with spirits heated to frenzy by the memory of their wrongs and the words of their pastors, raised their hymn of battle, threw themselves upon their assailants, and drove before them twice their own number of disciplined soldiers. It was in vain that Baville, astonished and enraged at the ill success of his troops, arrested and hanged or sent to the galleys every Protestant he could lay his hands on. The whole country was evidently leagued against him; and his acts naturally led to fierce reprisals upon the Catholics. So formidable an appearance had the insurrection assumed by the commencement of 1703 as to attract the notice of the enemies of France. Two English ships, detached from the Mediterranean fleet, attempted but without success to pass supplies of ammunition and arms to the insurgents. Some assistance despatched by the Duke of Savoy, who had by this time entered, although with profound secrecy, into engagements with the Allied Powers, was more fortunate in reaching its destination.*

* Lettres Historiques. The writer ascribes the revolt to the inability of the Cevennais to pay the capitation, a new tax which had been imposed by Baville. St. Simon; Histoire des Camisards; Manifesto of the inhabitants of the Cevennes, printed in Holland, 1703. This document is one of the most moving protestations against tyranny ever penned.

The first army to move in the campaign of 1703 was that of the Elector of Bavaria. He seized on Neuburg, a town on the Danube, and from thence, as a centre of operations, began to send out parties to harass and overawe his neighbours. The amount of consternation caused by this prince, whose forces did not exceed eighteen thousand men, was truly wonderful. The Emperor knew not where to turn for soldiers to send against him. Of all the ninety thousand men originally promised by that potentate as his contribution to the Allied forces there were as yet but twelve thousand in the field; and these were stationed under the command of the Prince of Baden within some strongly fortified lines at Stolhoffen, a few miles below Strasburg, on the right bank of the Rhine.

By the middle of February the energetic Villars had again crossed the river. Villars had, during the winter, repaired to Court to make his acknowledgments for the marshal's bâton he had earned in the preceding year; but Louis, after loading his successful general with marks of favour and confidence, hastened his return to the army. His Majesty was now more than ever desirous of his effecting a junction with the Elector. The unaccountable movements of that personage after the battle of Friedlingen had given rise to suspicion. It was feared that he was carrying on negotiations with the Emperor, and would abandon the French alliance as suddenly as he had contracted it. The return of Villars to camp was indeed so much sooner than had been expected by his general officers, that upon arrival he found only two there to meet him, and grumbled greatly at the want of expedition shown by the remainder. The shortness of the days and the villainous condition of the roads he would not admit as valid excuses. He could remember, he said, how he himself had acted upon one occasion when the campaign was to be opened a little earlier than he had expected. Finding that post-horses were not to be obtained at Chalons, he had set out in a cart, and when that broke down had trudged on foot all the way to St. Menehould, leaving his valet to bring after him his portmanteau, and a peasant his saddle and riding-boots.*

Favoured by a week of fine frosty weather, the French army

* Mémoires de Villars.

crossed the Rhine, advanced rapidly up the right bank, drove back the Prince of Baden, who, with a few troops attempted to dispute the passage, and laid siege to Kehl. In the space of thirteen short, cold, winter days that fortress, the work of Vauban, and fully garrisoned at the time by the Imperial troops, to the astonishment of all Europe, capitulated. It was a feat of which the Marshal might well feel proud, and indeed the glory belonged principally to him. During the whole time of the investment he scarcely quitted the trenches. There he remained throughout the day, seeing that the engineers did their business, and frequently taking the spade into his own hands to animate his exhausted pioneers; and there he was still to be found in the dreary hours of the night, drinking and chatting with the soldiers, and telling them that the French were the only men who were equal to making war in the winter. Without this display of energy the work would probably not have been accomplished; for the weather was horrible, and the trenches were exposed to constant inundations by the swelling of the Kinzig.* He naturally expected that for this exploit he would have been advanced a step in the peerage; but in this hope he was disappointed. The military critics about Louis, it seems, had, as soon as the news of the investment reached court, pronounced with one voice that the enterprise would be a failure. Vauban, who was better acquainted with the fortress than any other man, denounced the scheme as rash and chimerical. Louis himself was of the same opinion; and was not a little piqued to find the vigour and gallantry of his marshal overcoming obstacles which his own royal judgment had pronounced insurmountable.†

It was now expected at Versailles that Villars would immediately push his way through the Black Forest, and effect the long-desired junction with the Elector; but Villars himself, better informed than his distant critics, recoiled before the difficulties and dangers of such a march in such a season. The country, flooded in some parts by swollen rivers, covered in others by snow two feet deep, was all but impassable for the best

* Lettres Historiques; Campagne d'Allemagne; Mémoires de Villars.

† I have taken this from Villars' own account. But St. Simon passes very lightly over the capture of Kehl.

equipped troops; and those of Villars, after a campaign which had, with but one brief interval of repose, lasted for eleven months, were in the most woeful condition. Every requisite for an army was wanting—arms, baggage-waggons, even tents to protect the unfortunate men from the rigours of a German winter. Under these disadvantages the Marshal found himself compelled to disappoint the wishes of Louis, and to send back his weary soldiers to France for a few weeks' rest. He, however, insured their return to Germany by the capture of five bridges at various points of the Rhine.*

The middle of April found his deficiencies remedied to some extent; and galled by the constant sarcasms upon his dilatoriness kept up by the critics at Court, he determined at all hazards to force a passage through the Black Forest.† It was indeed time that this design should be put in execution. The Elector was becoming impatient for assistance, as the Imperial armies were now collecting in reality, and a detachment of Dutch was on the road to join the Prince of Baden. Villars, who was averse to leaving an enemy in his rear, marched at once to dispose of this latter personage. He found his position, however, stronger than he had expected, and dreading nothing so much as a reverse after the strictures which had been passed upon him, he summoned a council of war, and allowed himself to be persuaded not to attack. As Tallard was in the neighbourhood, and would probably be able to keep this army in check, he determined to push on towards the Elector. The perils to which the French were exposed on the march were considerable. The valley in places became a defile so narrow that an enemy posted on the heights would have had little more to do than to roll down stones to destroy whole regiments. A few trees strewn, or a ditch dug across the road would have brought the whole army to a standstill for hours. But through the extraordinary negligence of Imperial commanders the French effected this dangerous passage without the loss of a man. A few fortresses on the road were carried in gallant style. On

* Mémoires de Villars; his correspondence with Louis in the Campagne d'Allemagne.

† St. Simon, who hated Villars, imputes his delay in crossing the Rhine to his vexation at the King refusing to allow his wife to accompany him on the campaign.

the 8th of May the army reached Duttlingen, and here the Elector made his appearance. As soon as he caught sight of the Marshal, he spurred towards him, embraced him with a fervour that nearly upset both men, and wept with delight. He called Villars the preserver of his life, his family, his dominions, his honour. He was almost beside himself with joy.*

After a few days spent in mutual compliments and congratulations, Villars unfolded to the Elector a scheme sufficiently characteristic of his vigorous and enterprising genius. What he proposed to the astonished Prince was in effect little less than to finish the war by a single stroke. His plan was to canton the troops of the Elector together with a considerable detachment from his own army at various points on the Danube between Ulm and Ratisbon. Upon a preconcerted day the whole force was to be embarked on the river. Passau and Linz would, if vigorously attacked, assuredly not hold out for three days; and in less than four-and-twenty hours after the capture of the latter town the Elector might be under the walls of Vienna. With the fortifications of the capital Villars had made himself acquainted during the time he had been employed on a mission to the Imperial Court, and he was satisfied that they could not sustain a week's siege. The Emperor would be taken completely by surprise. He would have scarcely a single regiment about him. He would have no time to recall his troops who were engaged in suppressing insurrections in Hungary and Bohemia. He would be compelled to accept such terms of peace as the King of France and his Electoral Highness might choose to dictate. For the defence of Bavaria, while the Elector was thus employed, Villars himself undertook to provide. He would take up his position at Donauwerth, and had no doubt, with the assistance he should receive from Tallard, of being able to hold in check both the army of the Prince of Baden and that of Count Stirum, who had about eighteen thousand men in the kingdom of Wurtemberg.†

Had the Elector possessed but a particle of the spirit and

* Campagne d'Allemagne; Mémoires de Villars; Lettres Historiques. Villars, in his letter to the King, says, "Il courût à moi, m'embrassant avec des larmes de joie, et fût près de me jeter à terre, et d'y tomber aussi."

† Villars to the King, May 16; Mémoires de Villars.

energy of Villars there can be little doubt that a serious misfortune would have befallen the grand alliance; but the Marshal was as yet insufficiently acquainted with the character of the Prince whom he was tutoring to act so brilliant a part. At first his Highness seemed captivated by the dash and fire of the scheme, and preparations were made for carrying it into execution by sending some French regiments to join the Electoral forces at Ulm; but in a few days Villars found to his mortification that the design, the success of which depended so absolutely upon its being kept secret that he had imparted it to no one except the Elector himself and his general, the Count d'Arco, had been published at Ulm, and was flying all over Europe in the newspapers. Still, however, he trusted that promptness of action might repair the effect of even this imprudence. The day on which the troops were to embark was actually fixed for the 2nd of June; but three days before it arrived came a letter from his Highness stating that circumstances had occurred which compelled him to forego the enterprise. He had received intelligence that Stirum was threatening an attack on the castle of Rotenberg, and he intended to go and protect it. Such a childish excuse drove the excitable Villars into a state bordering on frenzy. "What, sir!" he wrote back in his indignation, "will you allow the possible loss of two hundred men and three cannons to divert you from this splendid opportunity of laying prostrate the House of Austria? Shall it be said that the first service upon which the fine army I have brought you was employed was nothing greater than to relieve an insignificant castle?" But it was to no purpose that the Marshal conjured the Elector to lay aside all fears of Stirum and to continue his first design. His Highness, unhappily for his fame, possessed a wife of whom he stood in more awe than of Villars; and this wife was a staunch Imperialist. His Ministers also, either from faint-heartedness or corruption, were in the same interest; and the French scheme had in consequence been represented to the Elector as so romantic and hazardous that he had come to the resolution of giving it up.*

* Mémoires de Villars; Villars to the Elector, May 30. I fear that the accusations which St. Simon brings against the Marshal of wringing money out of the defenceless country are but too well founded.

By dint, however, of much vigorous persuasion the Elector was at length induced to superintend the execution of another plan, which, in a more circuitous and complicated manner, still promised to render him master of Vienna. He was to begin by making the conquest of the Tyrol, a country possessing no organised force, and in which it was presumed that the inhabitants, owing to their long immunity from war, had forgotten the art of defending their liberties. Meantime a correspondence was to be opened with Vendôme, who was to be instructed to advance from his position on the Po towards the Alps, and to effect a junction with the Elector. An attack might then be made by the combined armies upon the hereditary states of Austria. Whatever might be its ultimate result, such a movement, Villars felt assured, would have at least the effect of compelling the Emperor to withdraw his troops from Italy for the protection of his capital.

The Elector began his march, and for a week or two the reports of his progress were so satisfactory that the sanguine Marshal thought the success of his plan assured. The Bavarians, powerfully assisted by a fine regiment of French grenadiers, captured in a wonderfully short time Kufstein, a fortress of great strength, which was considered the key of the country. They pushed on to Inspruck, which submitted without striking a blow; and the example set by the chief city was followed by a number of smaller towns. The Elector still continued his advance towards Italy, and Villars was at the summit of joyful expectation. He was confident that Louis had sent, according to his recommendations, positive instructions to Vendôme to approach the Alps, and to Tallard to advance into Germany. "In less than two months," he wrote to the Elector, "your Highness will be at the head of eighty thousand men, and you may then give me a duchy in Bohemia or wherever else you please." But his happiness was not of long duration. The unwary Elector, presuming from the ready submission of the Tyrolese that they were a cowardly race, ventured to impose upon them some contributions which he needed for the purpose of paying off the heavy gambling debts he owed his Ministers. The whole country roused up in a moment. The burghers of Inspruck rose against the Bavarian

garrison; the enthusiasm spread from town to town, and the Elector found himself obliged to turn back, and undertake the conquest of the country anew. Misfortunes now came thickly upon him. Every march was a series of combats. The hardy mountaineers, assisted by a handful of regular troops, assembled in bands, watched the Bavarians from the heights, and often descended to attack them while struggling through defiles. For his personal safety the Elector was indebted to the gallantry of some French regiments. The greater part of his army gradually disappeared through the necessity of leaving behind strong garrisons in the recaptured towns. His officers frequently showed themselves cowards or traitors, and yielded up fortresses amply provided and considered to be almost impregnable to a crowd of peasants who had not even firearms. Amid these perils, hardships, and mortifications the Elector speedily grew tired of warfare and ambition, and the middle of August found him back again in his capital of Munich. Of the force which remained to him one portion was sent to the Danube to guard the frontier of Bavaria: the remainder he kept attached to his own person.*

His position was by this time indeed one of no little danger. Several Imperial armies were in the field, and Marlborough, whose supervision extended over the whole Continent, had been stirring up the northern powers to send assistance to the Emperor. Bavaria was invaded at once by eight thousand Danes from the side of Austria, and by another army under the Count d'Herberville, who forced an entrance from Bohemia. Villars found himself completely powerless to protect his ally from these calamities. He himself had been for two months blocked up in his camp on the Danube by the Prince of Baden. That commander had, after waiting a month, sufficiently recovered his spirits to follow the French into Germany, and having reinforced himself by a junction with Stirum, had ventured to throw up entrenchments within three miles of the redoubtable Marshal. In this position he had ever since remained, sometimes skirmishing with the French outposts, but still standing in too much awe of his adversaries to hazard an attack. At length Villars, whose spirit could ill

* Mémoires de Villars; Villars to the Elector, June 20; Lettres Historiques.

brook this confinement, formed a plan for liberating himself. He urged the Elector to secure Augsburg, one of the free cities whose neutrality had been hitherto respected; and the Elector, after undergoing the usual amount of pressure, consented to summon, and, if necessary, invest it. This movement had the effect of drawing the Prince of Baden from his impregnable entrenchments, and Villars at once set off in pursuit of him. He came up with him in the neighbourhood of Augsburg, but again the cautious Prince had entrenched his camp, and nothing would draw him into the open plain. He was of that German school of warriors whose first principle it was never to fight if fighting could possibly be avoided. The results to be obtained by scientific manœuvering were certain and bloodless, but there was too much of the element of chance in the hurry and confusion of a pitched battle. Villars, however, now received intelligence which turned his hopes in another direction. Stirum, who had been left behind by the Prince, had quitted his camp, and was now on the Danube, a few miles below the village of Hochstadt. The Marshal's plans were at once formed. Having sent off instructions to the Count d'Usson, whom he had charged to watch the movements of Stirum, he marched rapidly to Donauwerth, crossed the river, and on the morning of the 20th of September came in sight of the Imperial army. Three guns were fired as a signal to Usson, who thereupon issued from his camp, and began the attack. The Imperialists found themselves caught between two fires, but they fought with great spirit and resolution. Usson, whose division was not a strong one, was soon sent flying back to his camp; but a vigorous charge of Villars changed the fortune of the day. The Imperialists fled, leaving behind them their artillery and part of their baggage. This battle, called by the French the first battle of Hochstadt, was fought on nearly the same ground as that on which it was destined that the fate of the Empire should be decided in the following year by the genius of Marlborough and Eugene.*

The Elector had been present in the action, and had given satisfactory proofs that, however weak and inconstant he might

* Villars to the King, September 21. He awards high praise to an Irish regiment under Lord Clare. Lettres Historiques.

be, he was not devoid of personal courage. But it had cost Villars even more than the usual trouble to obtain his co-operation; and the Elector and the Marshal were now on very bad terms. Villars complained that he never could get a promise of support in any of his projects without importuning for it a whole week, and that the promise was not even then to be depended upon. His Highness passed entire days in listening to singers and fiddlers while hostile armies were closing round and breaking into his dominions. If he were counselled to strengthen the fortifications of his cities he would turn the conversation upon the summer-houses he designed to build, and the pleasure-grounds he wanted to lay out. The Elector, on his side, was not much better pleased with Villars. The Marshal rather prided himself on his ignorance of courtly forms, and occasionally spoke his mind even to the awe-inspiring Louis himself with a bluntness which froze the bystanders with horror. He was by this time heartily weary of his position in Germany. His communications with France had been long since cut off, and he was not without apprehension that some day the fickle Elector might make peace with the Emperor, and leave him unaided to fight his way back to the Rhine. No sooner had Stirum been driven from the field than new points of difficulty arose. The Elector wished to return to Bavaria, and there remain throughout the winter. Villars proposed to take up a station at Memmingen, with the double object of preventing an union between Stirum, who would soon replenish his ranks, and the Prince of Baden, and of opening, if possible, communications with Tallard. The latter plan was at length carried into execution, as Villars threatened that, unless the Elector gave way, he would set off with the French troops alone. At Memmingen he received the recall which he had repeatedly solicited from the King. His Majesty wrote in the kindest terms, promised to find employment for his servant elsewhere, and appointed Marsin, the general whom Villars had himself recommended, to succeed him in the command of the French forces in Germany.*

The exchange of Villars for Marsin, an officer of no great ability, but whom Louis now raised to the rank of a marshal,

* Mémoires de Villars.

was effected in November.* Marsin arrived in time to reap the fruits of the last well-judged manœuvre of Villars. The Prince of Baden, divining that the object of the French was to open communications through Switzerland, broke up from his position at Augsburg, and marched to Kempten, with the intention of taking up winter quarters between that town and the Lake of Constance. The effect of this movement was to abandon one of the wealthiest cities of Germany to the mercy of the French and Bavarians. The Elector and Marsin at once advanced against Augsburg, which, after undergoing a fortnight's siege, capitulated. With this important success terminated a campaign in which the genius of Villars narrowly failed of finishing the war by the destruction of that power which was principally concerned in it.

It is possible that a far more effective resistance might have been offered to the French and Bavarians but for a circumstance which, ever since the entrance of Villars into Germany, had kept the Imperial Government in a state almost of stupefaction. During the summer an insurrection had broken out in Hungary, which had rapidly developed into one of the most formidable rebellions ever excited even in that country, where attempts to shake off the Austrian yoke were periodical.

The leader was Prince Ragotzky. He was descended from a wealthy Hungarian family which had formerly held the elective principality of Transylvania, one of those unhappy borderlands of Christendom which was sometimes in the grasp of the Sultan and sometimes of the Emperor. The people of Hungary were perpetually tormented by a thirst for liberty: the Ragotzki were earnest patriots, and had for centuries sacrificed their own heads and the heads of their relations to decorate the gates and walls of Vienna. The last descendant of the race succeeded when a child to vast possessions, and to a name endeared to his countrymen and rendered odious at the Imperial Court by the conduct of many generations. His widowed mother gave her hand in second marriage to Tekeli, a cruel and savage nobleman who was then at the head of a party of insurgents, in the vain hope that he would prove a protector for herself and her son. But Tekeli was vanquished, the insurrection was

* See his character in St. Simon.

suppressed, the widow and her child were summoned to Vienna, and the latter was sent into Bohemia to be educated by the Jesuits. Upon his attaining maturity the Emperor, presuming that these skilful tutors had effectually transformed him into an useful and submissive subject, allowed him to return to his estates in Hungary. But antipathy to the Austrian Government was too natural to the soul of a Ragotzky to be supplanted by tuition. He read disaffection in the countenance of every person who approached him: he was soon a rebel himself; and he wrote to Louis imploring him to become the father and protector of Hungarian liberty. The negotiations, however, were on the very threshold betrayed to the Emperor. Ragotzky was arrested, and would no doubt have paid the penalties of treason had he not contrived to escape from prison. In his absence sentence was passed upon him: he was condemned to death: his estates were confiscated. For some months he wandered about Poland, closely hunted by Austrian emissaries. He then heard that a revolt had actually broken out in a corner of Hungary, and determined to join the daring little band of patriots that had recommenced the struggle.*

Animated by his name and directed by his talents, the insurgents soon became formidable. The handful of half-savage peasants increased to a great multitude, and the capture of some garrison towns furnished this multitude with arms and even with artillery. By the time that the Imperial Government had roused itself to the importance of the revolt it had extended over the greater part of Hungary, and the insurgents were reckoned at nearly a hundred thousand men. To quell such a rebellion at such a time was wholly beyond the feeble powers of the Emperor. A few troops were with difficulty collected and despatched into the kingdom. Wherever they encountered the rebels they maintained the superiority of properly disciplined bands over tumultuous and ill-equipped masses; but their successes were too small and isolated to have any effect in checking the spread of the rebellion. Throughout the greater part of 1703 the citizens of Vienna might employ their thoughts

* Histoire du Prince Ragotzi, 1707; Lettres Historiques; Coxe's History of the House of Austria.

in speculating as to whether the first enemy to reach their gates would be the French and Bavarians or the insurgents of Hungary. Little doubt can indeed remain that had the plan of Villars been carried with due energy into execution, the Emperor would have been forced to abandon all claims on the Spanish throne, and to secede from the Grand Alliance.

It yet remains to relate some by no means unimportant successes gained by the armies of France in this campaign. Tallard, after the departure of Villars, found himself at the head of about twelve thousand men, with no other task before him than that of keeping watch over the army of the Prince of Baden. He was after a time joined by the Duke of Burgundy with eight thousand additional troops. It had been the first intention of Louis that his grandson should resume the command of the army of the Netherlands with Villeroi and Boufflers for his tutors; but, unfortunately for the interests of the Allies, this design was reconsidered. For nearly three months the Duke and Tallard marched about, wistfully reconnoitring the lines of Stolhoffen through their glasses, but prudently abstaining from any attack. Convinced at length of the uselessness of wasting their time in surveying a series of earthworks so elaborately constructed as to resemble a fortress, and from which the best general in the French service had already retired in despair, they turned their energies in a new direction. Brisach was invested; Vauban was sent for to direct the engineers; and this town, weakly garrisoned and provisioned, and commanded by two governors who were at variance with each other, soon capitulated. This was sufficient glory for a son of France to achieve in one campaign; and Burgundy returned to Court, leaving Tallard to follow his own inclinations.*

For a short time that commander was in doubt whether he ought not to send a portion of his troops to the assistance of Villars; but news reached him of the battle of Hochstadt, and concluding that his brother marshal could now stand alone, he determined upon an enterprise which, if successful, would, he

* The writer of the Lettres Historiques observes, "Il y a longtemps que l'on s'étonnait de voir le Duc de Bourgogne occupé à se promener le long des rivages du Rhin, ou à regarder avec des lunettes à longues vues les alliés dans leur lignes de Stolhoffen. Cela ne paraissait guère digne d'un fils de France." Campagne d'Allemagne; St. Simon.

imagined, raise him to a high place in his master's opinion. He suddenly marched northwards, and laid siege to Landau. The intelligence of this movement caused a terrible commotion in Holland. There were scarcely any troops available for the relief of the town. The Imperialists upon the Rhine had been reduced, by the withdrawal of the Prince of Baden into Germany, to a few regiments. Marlborough had just distributed his forces into winter quarters. The States-general, however, directed the Prince of Hesse Cassel to march to the threatened quarter with seven thousand men; and at Spires the Prince was joined by another small army under the orders of the Count of Nassau Weilburg. The two generals were in high spirits. In a day or two they expected to receive further reinforcements: their forces would then outnumber Tallard's; and they proposed to surprise him in his lines. Unknown to them, however, their enemy had likewise received reinforcements in the shape of a large body of cavalry; and Tallard appears to have been better informed of their movements than they were acquainted with what was passing in his camp. On the 15th of November, while the Germans were joyously celebrating the birthday of their Emperor, and quaffing bumpers to the success of the attack which was to be made on the following day, two French deserters came running in with the news that the Marshal was approaching. Nassau, whose camp was at some distance from that of the Prince of Hesse, was the first of the two commanders to receive the intelligence. He at once galloped off to concert measures with his colleague, and then returning, hastily drew up his men to encounter the enemy. The Prince, on his side, made all haste to support the Count; but long before he could reach him the action had commenced. It was short and terrible. For a brief space the German infantry stubbornly maintained its ground; but the impetuosity and numbers of the French dragoons at last bore down everything before them. The Prince of Hesse arrived in time only to see the troops of the Count of Nassau flying from the field. It was much that he averted a similar overthrow, that he kept his men together, and effected his retreat with but little loss. In the general confusion both commanders got mixed up with the hostile cavalry, and fought like Paladins to extricate themselves.

Each of them, it was reported, slew a trooper with his own hand. But great as might be their personal courage, it could do little towards retrieving a disaster which had been occasioned by their careless generalship.*

While, however, the arms of the French king were progressing in Germany, the advantage had been in other parts of Europe on the side of the Allies. With the turn affairs had taken in Italy, Louis had good cause to feel much disappointment. He had with good reason expected at the commencement of the year that the war in this quarter would have been speedily brought to a triumphant close, that the Imperial troops, miserably wasted as they were in number, enfeebled by sickness, and almost surrounded by the French, would have caught at any terms which secured their retreat across the Alps. Yet the year passed, and not only had the Imperialists maintained their ground, but their position had in many respects improved. Their very confinement within narrow limits had proved of advantage to them; for the few towns they held were so strongly garrisoned as to deter Vendôme from attempting a surprise, and the tediousness of formal sieges was abhorrent to his mercurial nature. The first half of the year, accordingly, the French general wasted in ineffectual schemes to entice the enemy into the field; and he was then compelled, by orders from Court, to turn elsewhere. At the head of fifteen thousand men he proceeded towards the Tyrol in hopes of falling in with the Elector; but having penetrated, not without much hard fighting, as far as Trent, he found that town defended by six thousand Germans, and was at the same time overwhelmed by adverse intelligence. In every valley of that rugged and little-known region, he was informed there had been an uprising of the peasants. The Bavarians had been driven out with great loss, and an Imperial force was hastening along the roads to encounter him. In the perplexity in which Vendôme now found himself, he was not a little rejoiced to receive a letter from Louis, which enabled him to retreat from a dangerous position without loss of honour. He was ordered to return immediately to his camp in the Modenese, for the purpose of

* Tallard to the King, November 15; Campagne d'Allemagne; Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

putting in execution a measure which had been necessitated by the conduct of the Duke of Savoy.*

Evidence that Victor Amadeus was meditating an exchange of sides had been for some time accumulating. It had not escaped the notice of Phélypeaux, the French ambassador at Turin, that the Duke and some of his confidential ministers were in the habit of frequenting a house notoriously occupied by an Imperial agent. The ambassador had, at length, thought it his duty to communicate his suspicions to his master.† But Louis was slow in believing that the Duke really designed to separate his cause from his own and his grandson's. To him it seemed that both the interests and the personal sympathies of the Duke were necessarily on the side of France and Spain. Was it possible that the father of a princess, who might one day become Queen of France, could have any sentiment in common with the enemies of France? Was it possible that the father of the Queen of Spain could be thinking of joining himself to the Powers who were trying to overturn her throne? And could the Duke be mad enough, moreover, to meditate a rupture with France at a moment when her armies were close upon him and able to swallow up his whole dominions in a fortnight? The sovereign of Savoy, however, it seems, regarded his case in a very different light. As far as personal feeling went, it may be assumed that he still loved and wished well to his daughters. But he had little affection for Louis, whose haughty and grasping spirit had kept him in constant uneasiness, and by whose servants even he was sometimes treated in a manner which revealed that a marshal of France regarded himself as being on terms of equality with the sovereign of a petty state. Nor had he any greater liking for his son-in-law, the King of Spain, whose behaviour towards him on his recent visit, had borne an unpleasant resemblance to that of a grandee towards a poor relation.‡ As a matter of interest, Victor Amadeus, one of the clearest-sighted and most

* Correspondence between the King and Vendôme in the Campagne d'Italie; Lettres Historiques; St. Simon.

† St. Simon; Lettres Historiques. Burnet says that the inclinations of the duke were discovered through the instrumentality of the Elector of Bavaria.

‡ King Philip's dignity was too exalted to travel in the same coach with an uncrowned head. A duke, moreover, could advance no pretensions to be seated in presence of a king of Spain. Botta, Storia d'Italia; St. Simon.

spirited potentates of that age, was not slow in perceiving that the success of Louis and Philip in this war, and the close combination of their power which would probably ensue on that success, would be the most disastrous event which could happen to a sovereign of Savoy. His dominions would be almost enclosed by these formidable neighbours. The power of France would threaten him on one side; the power of Spain would threaten him from the side of the Milanese. That under such circumstances Savoy should long preserve its independence was little probable. On the other hand, the offers of the allies were tempting. The Emperor engaged, in consideration of his breaking with France and joining with himself, to transfer to him the duchy of Montferrat and the Alexandrine: the maritime powers promised him a large subsidy. Yet the close proximity of the French armies long restrained the Duke from acting upon his inclinations. At length the vigilance and stratagems of French diplomatists thoroughly penetrated the dissimulation of his conduct. The indignation of Louis, when the treachery of an ally whom he regarded almost in the light of a vassal, was manifest to him, was, as might be expected, intense. His first measure was to send orders to Vendôme to disarm the Piedmontese regiments which had hitherto co-operated with the French.*

The Marshal, overjoyed at a commission which enabled him to turn his back with honour upon the Tyrol, started off at once. On his road he dispatched couriers to the commanders of his various dispersed divisions to instruct them that a general parade of the army would take place at the camp of San Benedetto on the 29th of September. Upon that day the Piedmontese regiments, which had as yet received no intimation of the rupture between their master and the French King, were surrounded and disarmed; and no sooner had this business been accomplished than Vendôme set out at the head of a large detachment for Turin.

The intelligence of these vigorous and determined measures fell uponthe Duke like a thunder bolt. Nothing remained for

* Campagne d'Italie. Botta enumerates the following as the causes of the Duke's discontent—that he had but a nominal command of the confederate army, the non-fulfilment of certain promises of money, the hauteur of Philip, and the contemptuous treatment he and his generals encountered from Villeroi.

him now but either to apologise for his conduct, and to return to his bonds a more submissive and patient ally than ever, or to attempt to defend his independence against apparently overwhelming odds. The latter alternative seemed indeed a desperate one. His entire army did not exceed seven thousand men. His frontier towns were weakly garrisoned and ill-fortified. Two of the strongest, and indeed the keys of Piedmont, Casale and Pinerolo, had been in French keeping ever since the days of Richelieu. There was absolutely nothing to prevent one French army from pouring into Savoy through Chambery, while Vendôme forced an entrance into Piedmont from the side of Milan. But Victor Amadeus in this extremity never thought of submission. All dissimulation was now at an end. In retaliation for the disarming of his regiments he had every Frenchman arrested who could be found in Turin, and placed the ambassador himself under a guard. The courtiers, roused by the spirit of their master, vowed to defend him to the last drop of their blood. In a few days the whole population of Savoy and Piedmont was preparing for resistance. Some new regiments were enrolled: in certain districts the peasants were armed: the citizens of every town went hurriedly to work at the fortifications.*

In a few days Vendôme made his appearance on the frontier near Casale at the head of twelve thousand men. His first measure was to dispatch to the Duke a letter written by the French King. "Sir," ran this fierce and curt missive, "as neither religion, honour, interest, nor engagements under your own hand appear to be of any force between us, I have sent to you my cousin, the Duke of Vendôme, who will inform you of my determination. He will allow you but twenty-four hours to make your election." The demands of the Marshal were not a little stringent. The Duke was summoned to surrender the greater part of his towns into the hands of the French as pledges for his future fidelity, and moreover to reduce his military establishment to a peace footing. That these terms, hard and ignominious as they were, would be declined, Vendôme so little imagined that, notwithstanding the peremptory declaration of his master, he patiently waited eight days for a reply.

* Lettres Historiques; Botta.

It proved, contrary to his expectation, to be written with great firmness and spirit. The indignity which had been offered to his soldiers, said the Duke, and the contemptuous tone which had been adopted towards himself, had determined him to take precautions that would preclude his being subjected to such insults for the future.*

Yet neither the energy shown by Victor Amadeus nor the generous enthusiasm which his conduct had roused among his subjects, already incensed as they were by the domineering and brutal manners of the French, could long have warded off the conquest of dominions so defenceless, had not most welcome but scarcely expected assistance reached the Duke from the outside. News of the rupture between France and Savoy was not long in reaching the Imperial camp. The officer commanding in the absence of Eugene was the Count von Staremberg. With a promptness and decision which at a subsequent period of the war he hardly maintained, he resolved upon marching to the aid of the Duke. Twelve hundred out of fifteen hundred cavalry whom he sent off immediately succeeded in running the gauntlet of the French forces, and penetrated into Piedmont, where they were welcomed with transports of delight. A month later Staremberg himself followed with an army of sixteen thousand men, and by a march which attracted more than ordinary admiration, effected a junction with the Piedmontese troops in the neighbourhood of Turin.†

Before his arrival Louis had issued a formal declaration of war against the Duke, and a small force detached from the army in the Cevennes had made an easy conquest of the greater part of Savoy. The presence of Staremberg, however, rendered Vendôme cautious in his attacks upon Piedmont. Diplomatic relations between the court of Turin and the courts of the allied powers were rapidly established. In November a treaty between the Emperor and the Duke was concluded; and by January of the following year envoys from England and Holland had taken up their residence in the capital.

Another sovereign, the King of Portugal, had during the

* Lettres Historiques; Campagne d'Italie; Botta; St. Simon.

† Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Campagne d'Italie. The march was a series of engagements, and the French achieved several small victories over Staremberg's forces. The junction was effected 13th January, 1704.

month of May acceded to the grand alliance. From the moment that a war had been rendered imminent by the disputes about the Spanish crown, rival diplomatists had brought the whole resources of their ingenuity to bear upon the prince who held the only avenue through which it was possible to send an allied army into Spain.* The formidable display made by France of her preparations for war had at first fascinated the weak-minded King; but as the inability of that power to protect the coasts of Portugal from the fleets of the English and Dutch became more and more evident, his Majesty grew sensible of his mistake in choosing sides, and allowed himself to be drawn into a treaty by Paul Methuen, the English resident at Lisbon. The Emperor, after his fashion, was not sparing of promises which would cost him nothing to fulfill, and which indeed there was very little prospect of his ever having the power of fulfilling. The King of Portugal coveted some Spanish towns near his frontier. The Emperor was perfectly willing that he should have them; but the consent of a King of Spain was obviously necessary to ratify such a cession. In this difficulty it was suggested that a King of Spain should forthwith be created at Vienna, recognised at the allied courts, and sent into his dominions to try whether he could obtain the goodwill of the inhabitants. The suggestion appears to have been made by the Admiral of Castile, an Austrian partisan, who had deemed it prudent to take refuge from the power of Philip and Louis at the court of Lisbon. His senses, like those of Darmstadt, had been so warped by prejudice as to be incapable of conveying to him correct impressions of what must have passed before his eyes. The people, he said, detested Philip, and were eager to shake off a yoke they abhorred. But so strong was the reverence of Spaniards for royalty that there could be no hope of their revolting until another anointed King with a better title to their allegiance should appear in their midst. As soon as an Austrian sovereign landed in Spain there could be no doubt that aristocracy and people would hasten to cast themselves at his feet, and would drive the French usurper back across the Pyrenees. The Admiral's

* One of the most active of these diplomatists was the Prince of Darmstadt, a near relation of the king.

recommendations being in harmony with the inclinations of the Imperial court, it was decided to act upon them. The Emperor and his eldest son, the King of the Romans, it was arranged, should waive their rights to the Spanish crown in favour of the second son, the Archduke Charles, who should be at once invested with the title of King of Spain.*

The treaty signed by the King of Portugal provided for a vigorous prosecution of the war. His Majesty agreed to keep up an army of thirteen thousand men on his own account, and to apply subsidies which he was to receive from the maritime powers, towards maintaining fifteen thousand additional troops. These twenty-eight thousand men were furthermore to be reinforced by twelve thousand more who were to be despatched to Portugal by England and Holland.†

Meanwhile the campaign in the Netherlands had passed off without producing any of those stirring incidents which had been expected at the commencement of the year. The hopes of Louis had been in proportion to the scale of his preparations. Long before either army had moved from its winter quarters the accounts of the new levies marching towards the frontier, and of the vast magazines established at Namur, Dinant, and Charleroi had spread a panic in Holland. The French King, it was said, was now going to put forth his strength in earnest. This year he would not only recover all that he had lost, but anticipated carrying the war into the territory of the Republic.

Marlborough left England in March. During the winter his heart had been wrung by a severe domestic affliction. His only son, the Marquis of Blandford, to whom he had hoped to transmit the wealth and honours acquired by the successful efforts of a long public career, had fallen a victim to the small-pox.‡ In Holland death had been busy. Two officers, the Earl of Athlone and the Prince of Nassau Saarbruck, whose jealousy of

* Burnet. Charles was declared King of Spain on the 12th of September. There seems to have been no ceremony of a coronation. The Emperor, who fancied himself King, simply ceded his rights to his second son. One of Charles's first acts was to repair to Marienzell to pay his devotions to a miraculous image. Lettres Historiques.

† The treaty in Latin between the Emperor, the Queen, and the States-general, is set forth in Lamberty. It was ratified by the Queen on the 14th of July.

‡ Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough. The most intimate friend of the marquis was young Horace Walpole. I should not imagine that Congreve's Tears of Amaryllis for Amyntas conveyed much consolation to the afflicted parents.

the English commander-in-chief might have led to evil consequences, had both been removed from the scene. The post held by the former of Field-marshal of the United Provinces had been divided between two generals, Overkirk and Opdam. Opdam bore no great reputation for military skill, and his promotion to a position of responsibility seems to have been brought about by influential connections. But Overkirk was the pride of the Dutch army; and those English veterans who could remember the day of Steinkirk regarded the illustrious Hollander with feelings of admiration and gratitude.

The inclinations of Marlborough were to resume the thread of conquest at the point where it had been dropped at the close of the preceding year, and to push on into French Flanders and Brabant. But the Dutch he found too timid to consent to so bold a plan. One successful campaign had not sufficed to obliterate from their memories the awful might of the French King. His soldiers, they urged, were still close to them. While these terrible troops were in possession of the electorate of Cologne no Dutchman could enjoy a moment's feeling of security. As no military arguments could exorcise these apprehensions, Marlborough was forced to consent to waste the time of the allies by laying siege to Bonn. To Overkirk, meanwhile, was entrusted the duty of guarding the line of the Meuse.

Bonn, besieged in form by an army of nearly thirty thousand men, and with little prospect of deliverance, nevertheless contrived to hold out for a fortnight, and then to conclude a capitulation upon highly favourable terms.* Marlborough was in haste to bring this affair to a termination. To the astonishment and alarm of Overkirk, Villeroi and Boufflers had suddenly made their appearance before Maestricht with forty thousand men. It was conjectured that their design was to attempt the recapture of Liège, and the allied army was therefore quickly reunited. The Marshals, however, showed no disposition to measure strength with their adversaries. As Marlborough approached the Meuse they retired from its banks. On the 26th of June Boufflers separated from Villeroi, and marched off with a strong detachment to carry into execution a project of which sad intelligence was not long in reaching the allied camp.

* Marlborough to Godolphin, May 15—26.

The plan of campaign, as settled between Marlborough and the Dutch authorities, had been that, as soon as Bonn had fallen, attempts should be made upon Antwerp and Ostend. Cohorn and another Dutch commander, named Spaar, were upon a preconcerted day to combine their forces and to march upon Ostend. Opdam, meanwhile, with a third division, was to make an appearance before the lines which guarded the approach to Antwerp; and it was the intention of Marlborough to march to his support with the main army. By the middle of June Cohorn, Spaar, and Opdam were all in their allotted positions, and were awaiting only a sign from the Commander-in-chief to commence operations. But unhappily a temptation presented itself to Cohorn, against which his soul was not proof. He found himself upon the borders of the rich and populous Pays de Waes. What could be easier than to force a passage through the handful of troops which protected the region, to wring a heavy contribution from the inhabitants, and still to be back before the Commander-in-chief was ready to attack Antwerp? The States-general, to whom he applied for permission to execute his scheme, readily accorded it to him on the understanding that he was to content himself with his share, as governor of West Flanders, of one-tenth of the profits, and to pay over the remaining nine-tenths to the Dutch treasury.* Thus authorized, Cohorn and Spaar, towards the close of June, crossed the Scheldt, forced, not however without incurring considerable losses, the lines of the enemy, and began, according to the custom of civilised warfare, to extort from the defenceless inhabitants the produce of their industry. About the same time Opdam advanced to Eckeren, a village four miles from Antwerp, and there sat down in careless security to await the arrival of Marlborough. Intelligence of these movements was rapidly conveyed to Villeroi and Boufflers. They at once saw their opportunity. The division of Opdam was completely isolated. By a rapid march it would be possible to overwhelm it before Cohorn could return from his expedition across the Scheldt, or Marlborough could send any assistance. In a few hours Boufflers was on the road with upwards of twenty

* The letters of Marlborough, May 20—31, July 2—13, prove how completely averse he was to these schemes of the Dutch generals.

thousand troops. Before Opdam had received any intelligence, except an intimation from Marlborough that a strong detachment had left the French army, and that he would do well to be on his guard, he was fairly surrounded. Boufflers had occupied every avenue of retreat, and his attack was furious. The Dutch battalions, however, although taken by surprise, received the French dragoons with true northern phlegm. From three in the afternoon till nightfall of a midsummer day they maintained the contest with unbroken ranks; and then, their ammunition being exhausted, forced at the point of the bayonet an opening through the enemy. Opdam was missing from the commencement of the action, and for four-and-twenty hours it was surmised that he had been taken prisoner, when intelligence was received that he was safe and unwounded at Breda. He had, it seems, by changing his insignia for those of a French officer, contrived to pass unnoticed through the hostile squadrons. His story was a melancholy one. All his troops, he averred, had been cut to pieces, and he alone had, by the merest accident, escaped to tell the tale. The losses of the Dutch were, in truth, heavy. Out of a total of about twelve thousand men at least three thousand had fallen. But Boufflers, the most truthful of the French marshals, admitted that his victory had cost him the lives of upwards of a thousand of his troops, and that as many more had been wounded.*

Notwithstanding this disaster, Marlborough was anxious to carry through the project for obtaining Antwerp. Villeroi and Boufflers had now reunited, and had stationed themselves so as to cover the city. Its security was further provided for by an earthwork and a broad and deep fosse, stretching the whole way to Lierre. But would the Marshals venture to defend these lines with their whole army? If they should do so, and the passage should be forced, it was plain that their whole army would be destroyed; for with such a river as the Scheldt at their backs, escape would be impossible. If they declined to expose themselves to such a risk Antwerp would fall an easy prey. Difficult, and attended with much bloodshed as an attack

* For accounts of the battle of Eckeren see the Lettres Historiques; Campagne de Flandre; Boufflers to the King, July 1; Opdam to Marlborough, July 1; Opdam to the States-general, July 2 and 8; Hop to the States-general, July 1; Slangenberg to the States-general, July 2; Lamberty; Boyer.

upon the lines would necessarily be if defended by a strong force, Marlborough was firmly of opinion that an attack ought to be made. "If you have a mind to possess Antwerp, and to put a speedy end to the war," he wrote to Heinsius, "you must venture something for it."*

But Opdam's misfortune had utterly demoralised the deputies composing the States-general. All their old terrors of the "Invincibles" of Louis had recovered possession of their minds. Even Heinsius shrank from incurring the responsibility of recommending an attack upon lines rendered so formidable by art and defended by forty thousand of the best soldiers in Europe. The Dutch generals were meanwhile disputing as to the cause of their miscarriage. Opdam complained bitterly that he had been deserted by Cohorn. Slangenberg, a brave and skilful veteran, to whom belonged the principal merit of the heroic defence at Eckeren, and the glorious retreat from the field of battle, imputed the blame to Marlborough. Why, when he knew that a detachment had left the French army, had he not sent succours to Opdam? Why had he not fallen upon Villeroi when weakened by the withdrawal of Boufflers and twenty thousand men? It does not appear that Marlborough ever condescended even to notice the charges made against him in this affair. It is right to mention, however, that the day when Boufflers separated from Villeroi, the French army was at Diest, thus interposing between Opdam and the allied troops, which were stationed at Hasselt. By no possibility, therefore, could succours have reached Opdam in time to avert the disaster.†

As the Dutch would not consent to the hazardous operation of forcing the lines of Antwerp the allied army retraced its steps to the Meuse, followed in a parallel course by the French, who from behind their lines, a series of earthworks, canals and rivers stretching nearly the whole way to Namur, observed all their motions. Huy, a town garrisoned by nine hundred men

* Marlborough to Heinsius, July 15—26.

† Coxe states that "the only plausible accusation which has ever been advanced against the well-grounded fame of Marlborough was made on this occasion. Not only his enemies, but even his friends, considered his line of operations too extensive." But it is quite clear that he was not allowed proper control over the Dutch generals.

and of considerable importance as a military station, surrendered at discretion within ten days after being summoned. What should be the next undertaking of the army excited a warm dispute. Marlborough, who knew that he was perilling his reputation by wasting time in petty sieges while at the head of a force superior to that of the enemy, was for forcing an entrance into the French lines. Between Leuwe and the Mehaigne, he pointed out, there was a weak part six miles in length, against which the whole army might be brought. If the French attempted defence, a general engagement would ensue, which was what had been ardently desired from the beginning of the campaign. If they thought proper to abandon their lines the army could then push on to the most important enterprises. It would not be for long that so fair an opening would be afforded; for the enemy, fully alive to their danger, were employing the peasantry from far and near in working upon the defective points of their defences. The opinion of Marlborough was supported not only by the English officers, but by the commanders of the Danish and German auxiliaries; but still the Dutch would not give in. The operation, they protested, was one attended by far too much hazard. The proper course for the army was to complete the reduction of the Electorate of Cologne by taking Limburg. That would dissipate all remaining apprehensions in the Republic of a French invasion.

As all arguments were lost upon the Dutch deputies and generals, and as it was impossible to achieve anything without their co-operation, Marlborough was forced to give way. In a fit of vexation he fled from the sight of his tormentors to take charge of the division which was to besiege Limburg. "The unreasonable opposition I have met with," he wrote to Godolphin, "has so heated my blood, that I am almost mad."*

The capture of Limburg and of Geldern, which surrendered a little later, were the only remaining events of this campaign. In September the weather became unusually wet and boisterous, and both the French and the allied commanders were anxious to give repose to their troops.

* Coxe; resolutions adopted in a council of war, August 24, in Lamberty. There were thirteen English, German, and Danish officers against ten Dutch headed by Overkirk.

In October the Archduke Charles, who had been recently invested at Vienna with the title of King of Spain, reached Dusseldorf on his road to Holland and England. It had been settled, in accordance with the recommendations of the Admiral of Castile, that his Majesty should accompany the English and Dutch regiments which were about to be despatched to Portugal. Marlborough hastened to pay his respects to the young prince in whose fortunes all Europe was so deeply interested. Charles was then just entering upon his nineteenth year, and was wonderfully dignified and sedate, so at least he appeared to English observers, for his age. His reception of the hero and favourite, upon whose countenance, it was now evident, the advancement of his fortunes depended more than upon the countenance of any power or potentate in Europe, was as flattering as it could be made. After an exchange of compliments he unclasped from his side a richly-ornamented sword, and presented it to Marlborough. "I am but a poor prince," he said. "My cloak and my sword are all that I can call my own. The latter may be of service to your Grace; and I hope you will not think it worse for my having worn it a day." Marlborough replied, with that courtierlike grace of which he was perfect master, that he would freely hazard his life to make his Majesty the greatest sovereign in Europe.*

From Dusseldorf Charles, escorted by Marlborough and by deputies from the States-general, proceeded to the Hague. The brilliant entertainments there given in his honour, the rough and noisy demonstrations of attachment to him which took place whenever he made his appearance in public, must have somewhat startled a prince just emerged from the sombre seclusion of the court of Leopold. The scheme of a tour which it had been desired he should make through the United Provinces, was, it was thought, abandoned from the inconvenience to which he was exposed by the tumultuous thronging of republican admirers about his carriage.† During two months his passage into England was delayed, first by the fears of the Ministers, who

* Boyer. Lamberty says that Charles presented Marlborough with his portrait enriched with eleven large diamonds of the value of eight or ten thousand florins. The sword was also studded with jewels worth sixteen thousand florins.

† Lettres Historiques.

were dissatisfied with the strength of the English squadron which had been sent to escort him, and then by the awful storms which agitated the German Ocean. It was not until the new year had commenced upon the Continent that the waves had grown sufficiently calm to be entrusted with a life of such importance to the destinies of Europeans as that of his Spanish Majesty.

Marlborough, in the meantime, anxious to return home to his friend Godolphin, whose courage and patience were in need of some reinforcement in the difficulties to which he was exposed, put to sea, and reached England on the 10th of November (Old Style).

The position of the two friends was indeed peculiar. Never since the fall of Wolsey had there been so exclusive a monopoly of the royal confidence as that now enjoyed by Godolphin and Marlborough; and never, consequently, had there been so general a feeling of dissatisfaction among the multitude of intelligent and experienced counsellors who surrounded the sovereign. The Tories, in the nominal enjoyment of favour and power, were even louder in their complaints than the Whigs, who knew themselves to be objects of the royal antipathy. Ministers like Rochester, Nottingham, Jersey, and Sir Charles Hedges were not men to be contented with the position of clerks. They had, it is true, pledged themselves upon taking office to support the war which had been already declared against France. But they had not agreed to abandon their claims to take part in the direction of that war, to stand by as mute spectators while two favourites, exercising the royal will, disposed of the army, the navy, and the finances just as they pleased. In what manner it behoved the nation to carry on a continental war was a question which the Tories had long since decided to their own satisfaction; and the decision had been, as it were, incorporated as an article in the political creed of the party. It was idle for this country to think itself a great military power, and able to cope on land with the soldiers of Louis. Now and then, perhaps, British valour might achieve a seeming success, but the French King had only to issue an edict, and fresh supplies of armed men would make their appearance in overwhelming numbers. And if the advantages

we achieved did not prove so evanescent as they might be expected to be, who after all would be the gainers? Was it not clear that we were spending our money and sending our soldiers to be knocked on the head simply for the benefit of the Dutch? The defence of Holland ought to be left to the States-general, just as it should be left to the Germans to prevent the French from crossing the Rhine. It was on the sea, where we as much surpassed the French as they surpassed our power on land, that England should show her invincible strength. If the navy were but in a state of efficiency, we might blockade the harbours, bombard the seaport towns of France, sweep her commerce from the seas, and conquer every colony she possessed in the West Indies. But even granting the necessity of sending a military force to the continent, it was not in the Netherlands, a region thickly studded with walled towns, and where the French had every advantage that science could afford them, that we should make our principal efforts, but in Spain, an open country, and where, it was asserted, the population was favourable to our cause. A single victory achieved in the Peninsula would probably put an end to the war by driving Philip from the throne. A dozen victories achieved over the French troops in Flanders or Brabant might fail in reducing the haughty might of Louis to the requisite degree of humiliation.*

Such was the line of reasoning adopted by the Tory party, and to this line they remained firm throughout the whole course of the war. Marlborough was of a different opinion, and from the earnestness with which he combatted the arguments of the Tories in his private letters, it is impossible to doubt his sincerity. If the Dutch were left to themselves, he thought, they would be certainly conquered. The Republic would become a mere province of France. From the Texel to Gibraltar the will of Louis would be implicitly obeyed, and it would then be impossible for England to withstand the overwhelming array of force that could be mustered against her. The Pretender would recover the throne, and the

* These Tory doctrines are culled from letters and speeches extending throughout the reign. Swift's Conduct of the Allies fairly represents what were in 1710, and long before that period, the views of the Tory party in regard to the war.

liberties and religion of the country would be extinguished together.*

To get rid of colleagues who at the council board were unsparing of their sarcasms, and who in every society were insinuating that the general had chosen a method of conducting the war which promised to be endless, for no better purpose than his private advantage, would have been felt as a hearty relief by Godolphin and Marlborough. But the difficulty was how to supply their places.† The ranks of the Tories contained few men of any eminence beyond those who were already in office. The Duchess teased her husband incessantly to turn to the Whigs. But Marlborough, little as he loved the decided members of either party, still entertained a lingering partiality for that party with which he had been always associated; and he shrank also from incurring the blame and suspicion which invariably attend a statesman who changes sides. There was, moreover, another obstacle to such a course. The Queen, it seemed certain, would never admit a Whig to any high employment. Upon this subject the Duchess had already found out, to her no small mortification, that she could not have her way with her mistress.‡ Anne would listen with the meekest patience to the political lectures of her favourite, but not a word would she utter to denote that her opinions touching Whigs and Tories had undergone a change. The saucy waiting-woman went so far as to threaten that she and her husband would resign; but even this awful threat failed to produce the required effect. It drew, indeed, from Anne a letter of tender entreaty and upbraiding. Mr. and Mrs. Freeman should a little consider their poor country, which must be ruined if they put such melancholy thoughts into execution. Their poor, unfortunate, faithful Morley could never bear it: she would have nothing more to do with the world: she would abdicate; for how could she endure the weight of a crown without their support? She would never forsake her dear Mrs. Freeman, nor Mr. Freeman, nor Mr. Montgomery.

* See, in particular, Marlborough to the duchess, June 10—21, 1703, and an undated letter (probably of September) in Coxe's Memoirs.

† "Some of them might, in my opinion, be removed, as Lord Jersey and Lord Nottingham. But who is there fit for their places? I do profess before God, I know of none."

‡ Conduct of the Duchess.

They four should never part until death mowed them down with his impartial hand.*

One member of the administration had indeed been removed early in the year. Rochester's arrogance and jealousy of the two favourites who had usurped the place in the royal affections which, in right of his near relationship to the sovereign, he had anticipated would be his own, had, after a short experience, been found intolerable. Anne, who bore little love to her uncle, was easily prevailed upon to concur in a scheme for dropping him. He was ordered to proceed at once to Ireland, of which kingdom he was Lord Lieutenant. As some time was to elapse before the meeting of the Irish Parliament he saw that the design was to get rid of him, and refused to comply with the order. His post was thereupon taken from him, and bestowed upon Ormond.†

The discontent which had been excited by the monopoly of the royal favour had been much increased by the miserable failure this year of all the operations by sea. The direction of naval affairs was, in truth, in bad hands. At the head of the Admiralty was Prince George, who knew nothing about his business, nor troubled himself to learn it. Of the five officers who formed his council Rooke stood highest in general estimation. But nature, which had blessed Rooke with the best qualities for one who is to exercise a subordinate command, had denied him the comprehensive intellect which is requisite in planning great enterprises. His unpolished manners were, moreover, ill calculated to impress favourably a shallow prince. The officer by whose opinions his Royal Highness was principally swayed, was Admiral George Churchill, a younger brother of Marlborough. George Churchill was a Tory, vehement, loquacious, fond of thwarting, whenever occasion offered, his highly advanced relation, and utterly devoid of good sense.

It had been decided early in the year to send assistance, if possible, to the revolted Cevennois. Nottingham honourably distinguished himself at the council-board by combatting with great earnestness this proposition. To support rebels against

* The letter is given in Coxe's Life. Montgomery, of course, means Godolphin.

† Ormond was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in February 1703; Luttrell's Diary. There was great joy at Dublin; Lettres Historiques.

their lawful and hereditary prince he regarded as contrary to the principles of civilised warfare, and as furnishing an example which an English sovereign, especially under existing circumstances, should carefully eschew.* But zeal for the Protestant religion in the mind of Anne, coupled with the hope in the minds of her counsellors of dealing a deadly blow at the enemy, outweighed these considerations; and on the 8th of July Sir Cloudesley Shovel sailed from Torbay with a fleet of thirty-five English and fourteen Dutch ships of war.

As far as the Straits of Gibraltar the voyage was prosperous; but then began a succession of misfortunes. At first the wind was adverse, and then fell to a dead calm. The heat was excessive, the ships were soon in want of water, and the Admiral was compelled to make a descent upon Valencia. The governor of that city, half stupefied at the sudden apparition of fifty men-of-war anchored within range, thought it best to be extremely polite. Personally, he said, he had a great esteem for the English. He would write to the Viceroy of the province for instructions. Meanwhile, he confessed, it would be useless for him to oppose their landing. But if, when his messenger returned, he should find his orders to be to treat the allies as enemies, he hoped that the Admiral would not take it ill if he should even fire upon his men. The citizens imitated the prudent demeanour of their governor. As order was strictly maintained, and everything was scrupulously paid for, there was soon a good supply of all articles needed by the sailors; and in forty-eight hours the ships were in a condition to resume their voyage.†

But so much time had been wasted that the season of the equinoctial gales was now approaching, and Shovel and his captains were unanimous in considering it the height of imprudence to trust their ships at such a time in water so dangerous as the Gulf of Lyons. It was decided, therefore, to abandon the original design of proceeding with the whole fleet to the succour of the Cevennois, and two ships only were despatched to the coast of Languedoc, with orders to endeavour to open com-

* Boyer declares that opposition was made to the proposition of supporting the Cevennais, and Coxe is probably correct therefore in imputing the lead to Nottingham.

† Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

munications with the insurgents, and concert measures for relieving them in the ensuing year. The captains of these two ships discovered, however, as they approached the shore, that their arrival was not unexpected, and that it would be impossible to effect a landing on account of the strongly-manned galleys which issued from every seaport, and of the large military force which could plainly be discerned. For a fortnight they continued to cruise about, making the signals which had been agreed upon with the Cevennois, but meeting with no answer; and they then deemed it expedient to sheer off from a coast so perilous and so imperfectly known as that of Languedoc.*

The 17th of November found Shovel and the greatest portion of his fleet returned in safety to the Downs, and all Europe wondering what could have been the object of his journey. With an array of strength such as had seldom been seen before in the Atlantic and never yet seen in the Mediterranean, he had convoyed one set of merchantmen to the Straits and another home from Oporto. Rooke, meanwhile, with a second fleet, almost as powerful, had failed even to protect British commerce in the Channel. The council of Prince George had directed him early in the year to blockade the port of Brest, in which lay a French squadron. But Rooke fancied he detected in the order a scheme of Churchill for sending him to a distance, and in consequence pretended that he had the gout, and remained on shore. It was not until a rumour reached him that the Prince was on the point of despatching Churchill himself to perform the duty, that the irascible old sailor thought proper to recover his health and to hoist his flag. But it was then too late. The French had cleared out of Brest just in time to intercept a fleet of merchantmen escorted by five Dutch ships of war. In the action that ensued the sailors of the United Provinces well maintained their reputation for prowess. They fought their ships until every one of the five had been either captured or sent to the bottom, and their prolonged resistance gave time to most of their charges to escape.†

* Boyer. The truth is, that as soon as the English vessels appeared off the coast, the whole country was up in arms to resist an invasion. The Cevennois were unable to get near the coast. The understanding, moreover, between the Cevennois and the English government seems not to have been very clear.

† Burnet; Boyet; Lettres Historiques.

The Mediterranean fleet had not been long returned to the Downs before a storm occurred, which, both for the damage it occasioned and for the immense area over which its ravages extended, left a deep imprint on the memories of the population. It will be accounted a loss by a scientific generation that not one of the numerous pamphleteers and newswriters who recorded the numbers of houses destroyed, of people killed, and of trees blown down, should have taken the pains to ascertain the path and progress of the storm, and the particular times at which it commenced in different places. In London its violence reached its height towards midnight of the 26th of November (Old Style); and it is at least certain that it raged on the same night in all the southern counties of England. Holland and the coast of France it appears to have reached a little later, but with undiminished fury. The day that succeeded this terrible night disclosed to the Londoners a strange and melancholy spectacle. Every street was encumbered with the wrecks of dwellings. St. James's palace, the residence of the Queen, had lost its chimneys and a part of its battlements, while many of the noble trees which adorned its park lay prostrate on the ground. Chelsea College, the guard-house and banqueting-house at Whitehall, had been all shorn of portions of their masonry. The damage to churches and to private dwellings was roughly estimated to exceed fifteen hundred thousand pounds. Nineteen persons, it was ascertained, had perished either from the fall of their houses or from being struck with objects in the streets.

From the provinces came pouring in tale after tale of disasters. The storm had burst with equal fury over the coast of Devonshire, the Somersetshire marshes, and the cherry orchards of Kent. The Eddystone lighthouse, a wooden building which had stood for six years, was carried away with the engineer who had constructed it and a staff of workmen. At Wells the bishop and his wife had been killed by a chimney which fell through the roof of the palace. Bristol, then the second commercial city in the kingdom, had been a heavy sufferer. An immense volume of water, forced by the wind up the narrow channel of the Avon, had flooded every street of the lower part of the city to a depth of two feet, and had set floating all the hogsheads of sugar and tobacco which were stored up in the cellars. The

merchants declared that a hundred thousand pounds would not cover their losses. Yet the calamities of the city were as nothing when compared with the utter ruin which befell the inhabitants of the low-lying pasture lands which border on the Severn. For an extent of thirty miles the country was under water, and men and women who had taken refuge from the waves in the tops of trees or on the roofs of their houses, were calling vainly for help. More than a week elapsed before boats, brought on waggons from Bristol, succeeded in rescuing some of the sufferers; but they escaped with nothing but their lives. Their flocks were drowned, and their cottages washed away.

From Holland the reports, received after an intermission of several days, were that many of the dykes had given way, that large tracts of land were inundated, and that half the houses of the Hague had been unroofed by the fury of the wind. The tempest had extended its ravages through a great part of the Netherlands. The damages sustained by Brussels, Antwerp, Malines, Ghent, and Bruges were computed to amount to many millions of florins. In the villages of the flat country adjacent, churches, houses, and barns had been blown to the ground. Ostend lost more than a hundred of its buildings. The principal fortifications of Dunkirk had been entirely destroyed by the waves. From Gravelines to the mouth of the Somme the coast was strewn with the wreck of vessels.

The pages of the *London Gazette* were soon filled with disastrous tidings from Deal and Yarmouth, from the southern ports and from the Severn. Out of a hundred and sixty sail which had, on the 26th of November, been counted in the Downs, a few ships only were visible when day broke on the 27th. Merchantmen and men-of-war had been alike blown from their anchorage to take their chance in a raging sea beset with quicksands. The first news of the fleet which reached London was that five of her Majesty's vessels had been wrecked on the Goodwin Sands. An infinite number of smaller craft appears to have escaped from the fortunate circumstance that the Goodwin was, on the night of the storm, covered to an unusual depth by a spring tide. From the eastern and southern coasts came soon afterwards intelligence of the wreck of eight

more vessels belonging to the navy. The crews were happily not at their full complement; yet the loss of officers and seamen exceeded fifteen hundred. For the safety of Shovel and Rooke, and the ships under their charge, great anxiety was felt. A week elapsed before it was ascertained that the former, who had endeavoured to enter the Thames, had got into Yarmouth, and a much longer space of time before intelligence arrived that Rooke's squadron, which was waiting in the Meuse for a fair wind to bring over King Charles, had ridden out the gale with but little injury. Of Admiral Sir Stafford Fairborne and his ship the *Association*, nothing was heard for a whole month, when letters came from Gottenburg reporting that he had put in there. After a narrow escape of foundering on a dangerous shoal called the Galloper, he had been driven along the Dutch and German coasts as far as the mouth of the Elbe. Then the wind, after nearly blowing him on shore, had shifted, and sent him in the direction of Norway; and with a crew sickening from fatigue and exhausted by hunger, he had been glad to seek a temporary refuge in the best harbour of this region.*

* For accounts of the great storm see Lettres Historiques under the articles of England, France, and Holland; Boyer; Burnet; Oldmixon; Chamberlin; Luttrell's Diary; Lamberty. Defoe wrote a work on the subject.

CHAPTER VI.

MARLBOROUGH was, on his return home, received by Anne with as much cordiality as he could desire. On the 9th of November, ten days after his arrival, the Parliament reassembled, and he and Godolphin prepared to encounter a session which, judging from the discontents prevailing among their own colleagues, the intrigues Rochester was carrying on with some parties in the House of Commons, and from the ill-humour of the Tories generally, promised to be a stormy one.

Upon the military and naval events of the past season there was little for the Queen to congratulate her subjects. It might, however, be said with some plausibility that the labours of the diplomatists had made up for the want of success of the generals and admirals. The accession of Portugal and Savoy to the league against France might well be esteemed as equivalent to a great victory over the arms of the French King; for the former opened to the allies a passage into Spain where the war might, it was imagined by many, be decided by a single campaign; and Savoy, in addition to insuring to the German arms the predominance in Italy, might be used as a vantage-ground for attacking France upon her most vulnerable side. Under these circumstances the royal speech was rather sanguine and jubilant in its tone. Anne rejoiced in the fair prospect now before the nation of bringing the war to a glorious and speedy conclusion. She requested supplies commensurate not only with the previous engagements of the country, but with the new demands which had arisen from its relations with Portugal and Savoy. No fresh debt, she informed the Commons, had been contracted, notwithstanding the absence of any provision either for the augmentation of troops to serve in Flanders or for the expedition to Portugal. She had herself

contributed from her own revenue to some branches of the public service, particularly to the support of the circle of Swabia, whose adherence to the cause under most trying circumstances, she thought well merited encouragement. In conclusion she made an earnest appeal for moderation to the members of both Houses. She wanted words, she said, to express her earnest desire of seeing all her subjects at peace and in union one with another. She had nothing so much at heart as their general welfare; and she hoped therefore that all such heats and divisions would be carefully avoided as would deprive her of the satisfaction she desired, and would give encouragement to the enemies of Church and State.*

It was impossible to mistake the meaning of this appeal. The promoters of the bill for preventing occasional conformity had made no secret of their intentions of endeavouring a second time to force it through Parliament. St. John, Bromley, and the other Tory leaders were little disposed to forego an excellent opportunity for making themselves popular by parading their zeal for the Church. And was it possible that the pious Anne would be really against such a measure? Was it not rather clear that the monopolists were feeling their way to an alliance with the Whigs, and were putting words into the mouth of their mistress, the meaning of which she did not fully comprehend?

The agitators showed, however, so much respect to the royal exhortation as to postpone their bill until some of the most urgent duties of the Parliament had been performed. For a fortnight there was perfect concord; and during that time the supplies were voted for maintaining the military and naval establishments. The additional burdens cast upon the country by the recent engagements of the sovereign were estimated at five hundred thousand pounds; but there was a general shrinking from the disagreeable duty of imposing any increased or fresh taxes upon the population. Most of the members seem to have preferred that the nation should be run quietly into debt rather than be troubled by a requisition to pay its way.

No sooner, however, had this necessary business been per-

* Parliamentary History.

formed than the Tories recommenced the fray. On the 25th of November Bromley moved for leave to introduce a bill for preventing occasional conformity. There was a warm debate, which lasted during three hours; but in the end the supporters of the bill were found to be one hundred and seventy-three against one hundred and thirty.*

Upon the bill being read a first time two days afterwards it was seen that its provisions had been greatly softened, in the hope of conciliating those members whose opposition might arise not so much from a dislike to the principle of the bill as from the extreme harshness with which it treated the Dissenters. The extravagant fine of a hundred pounds was now reduced by one-half, and the fine of five pounds a day for the time a person continued to hold office after visiting a conventicle was omitted altogether. The preamble, moreover, which, in an act of such severity, had excited some ridicule by its solemn assertion that persecution in matters of conscience was contrary to the principles of the Christian religion and the doctrines of the Church of England, was also wisely left out. The bill, nevertheless, was not suffered, as in the previous session, to pass without a division. In addition to the Whigs it had now to encounter two new sets of opponents—members whose action was regulated by the supposed royal inclinations, and who thought the Queen sincere in wishing to postpone this harsh measure for a more convenient season; and members who, although approving the design of the bill, deemed its advantages insufficient to counterbalance the evil effects which might arise from a quarrel with the Upper House. Some hot speeches were delivered, for the passions of men both outside and within the walls of Parliament had been wrought up to a high degree. A discourse of Sir John Packington has been preserved, and is a curious specimen of the style of oratory which then occasionally graced the House of Commons. "How came this bill to be lost in the previous session?" he demanded. "Because, forsooth, two or three noble lords chose to absent themselves from the division. And is it not a shame that we who have spent eighty millions for the preservation of the Protestant religion should have trimming in a bill to prevent hypocrisy?

* Parliamentary History; Burnet.

The ancient Athenians forced their citizens, when any important difference arose, to take one side or another, or banished them the city; and I say that members of Parliament and ministers of State who stand neuter in matters that so nearly concern the Church very well deserve to be turned out. And who are the trimmers? A party of men whose hatred of the Stuarts descends to them by inheritance—men who offered open violence to her Majesty's royal grandfather—men who have the impudence not only to justify the action, but to turn the anniversary of the murder into ridicule by feasting on a calf's head." Such was the tone employed by a Tory member in vituperating his political adversaries; and the oration of Packington is stated to have expressed the general sense of the House. Eventually the bill passed the Commons by a majority of eighty-three votes—two hundred and twenty-three against a hundred and forty.

But, as in the last session, the bill no sooner reached the Lords than it passed into a new atmosphere. Several Whig peers spoke strongly against the principle of the motion, and still more strongly upon the impolicy of attacking the Dissenters at a time when it was essential that the whole nation should be united. Wharton begged his audience to consider the distracted state of Scotland and Ireland, and to reflect whether this was the time for increasing divisions at home; and upon this occasion his arguments were supported by the Tory Haversham. The fiery Mohun said bluntly, that if the bill were to pass they might as well tack the Pretender to it. Burnet delivered a long, learned, sensible, though, as might be expected from him, rather a rambling discourse against the bill, and again urged his favourite topic of the impolicy of religious persecution, which invariably increased the dissent it was designed to eradicate. He himself, he admitted, had been an occasional conformist. When he was abroad he had sometimes communicated with the Churches of Geneva and Holland, while still continuing in communion with his own Church; nor could he see that occasional conformity with a less perfect Church was inconsistent with his sincerity in worshipping God in a more perfect one. One passage in his harangue was evidently meant for a return thrust to Packington's assault on the Whigs.

"We may well suspect," observed the good prelate, "what is the design of this measure when the men who promote it, and who write in favour of it without doors, are the known and avowed enemies of the Government, who deny the Queen's title, and are looking to a prince beyond the sea." The most prominent characteristic of the men of this reign is the tendency of each party to impeach the loyalty of the other. There is not an atom of evidence to show that Packington was a less devoted subject to Anne than Burnet, or that Burnet was any more of a republican and an enemy to the Church than Packington. But a Tory could no more refrain from charging a Whig with republicanism than a Whig could refrain from calling a Tory a Jacobite.

The second reading of the bill was negatived in rather a thin House by a majority of twelve voices. Marlborough and Godolphin both recorded their protests against its rejection. The conscience of the former upon this subject must have been powerful indeed, for it impelled him to expose himself to an engine which he dreaded more than all the guns and bayonets of the French king—the tongue of his wife; and the impetuous Sarah did not in fact spare her husband. The protest of Godolphin, it was thought, was made simply with the view of conciliating the Commons in a matter about which they had shown so much determination.*

The reports of the calamities occasioned by the great storm were promptly followed by an address to her Majesty. The Commons could not, they said, witness any diminution in her navy without providing for its replacement; and they besought her, therefore, to issue the necessary orders for building ships in substitution for those which had been lost. They begged her at the same time to make provision for the families of those seamen who had perished until the House could vote the requisite supplies. Anne soon after proclaimed a general fast to be kept on the 19th of January for the purpose of deprecating the divine vengeance, and imploring the Almighty that he would avoid sending such high winds in future. The day, it was remarked, was observed by the English nation with more

* Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough. See an undated letter from Marlborough to the duchess.

than ordinary solemnity and rigour.* A defeat of our arms in battle might seem, even to devout persons, to be owing as much to the incompetency of the general as to the interposition of the Almighty; and there might be difficulty in many minds to perceive why the nation should fast because a commander wanted brains, or how its fasting could improve the intellects of succeeding commanders. But a calamitous wind could proceed from God alone; and that He should choose to afflict his creatures so severely appeared an unmistakeable sign of his wrath.

The arguments put forward by Wharton and others as to the impolicy of irritating the Dissenters just at the moment when two of her Majesty's kingdoms were in a state of distraction mainly through religious differences, told with enhanced effect upon the House, inasmuch as, while the bill was under consideration, information was received which, for a time, caused grave apprehensions to be entertained that a widely ramified conspiracy existed in the North, and that France was preparing to assist the conspirators. For several months past, it seems, Queensberry had satisfied himself, and had persuaded the English ministers, that some dark plot was brewing in Scotland. His eagerness to ferret out matter of accusation was, it may fairly be presumed, a good deal sharpened by a very natural desire to be revenged upon the Jacobites for the trouble they had given him during the Parliamentary session. Yet he had succeeded in discovering nothing material; and the only result of his revelations had been to make his friends, the English Whigs, uneasy. At length, early in December, several Scotchmen, notoriously in the interest of the exiled family, were captured by the custom-house officers when attempting to land on the coasts of Sussex and Kent. One member of the arrested party was known to be James Boucher, gentleman of the horse and aide-de-camp to the Duke of Berwick. There was then a solemn announcement by Anne from the throne that she had received unquestionable information of very evil designs carried on in Scotland by emissaries from France, and the

* Luttrell's Diary. Oldmixon observes, "It was kept with more signs of devotion and sincerity than ever I saw anything of that kind, the terror the tempest had left on people's minds contributing much to their affectionate discharge of that religious duty."

whole country was thrown into a state of excitement with wondering what fearful conspiracy the examinations of the prisoners would bring to light.*

During the next two or three weeks the Government was busy in making arrests both in England and Scotland, and the public, seeing this mysterious activity, was a prey to all manner of rumours. Letters had been intercepted, it was averred, stating that the Duke of Berwick was at Dunkirk, and about to sail for Scotland with six thousand men, thirty thousand stand of arms, and a hundred thousand louis d'or. The Prince of Wales would be with the fleet, and every arrangement had been made for a Highland rising to welcome him upon his landing. The information of the newstellers was even so accurate as to enable them to acquaint the public with the substance of the proclamations that would be issued by the Prince. The powerful Whig party of the Upper House was meanwhile on the alert. There was a deep suspicion that Tory ministers would deal leniently with and endeavour to screen from danger Jacobite prisoners; and this a majority of the Lords determined to prevent by availing themselves of their Parliamentary privileges. Seven staunch Whigs were chosen by ballot to act as a select committee, and Black Rod was despatched to take the prisoners out of the hands of the royal messengers into his own custody. This proceeding gave great umbrage to the Commons, already sufficiently bitter against the Peers. A strong complaint was at once carried up to the throne that the Lords, in violation of the known laws of the land, had wrested persons out of the hands of her Majesty in order to have their examination to themselves. These remarks upon their conduct the Lords very naturally resented, and the strife between the two Houses waxed hot. The Peers, in a long and ably drawn representation, the composition of Somers, explained and justified the step they had taken. The Commons, in another address to the Queen, complained of some of the statements that representation contained; and this second address elicited another long representation from the Lords, who appended a

* Burnet; Lockhart's Memoirs; Boyer: Lettres Historiques. The Queen stated that she had unquestionable information of very ill practices and designs carried on in Scotland by emissaries from France.

quantity of precedents from the journals of both Houses of persons already under arrest being by the order of either House transferred to the custody of its own officers pending their examination.*

This unseemly quarrel between the two Houses extended over a period of nearly three months. The Lords, whose right in the matter scarcely admitted of reasonable dispute, maintained their ground with a firmness and dignity which put to shame the virulent but puerile attacks of the Commons. Meanwhile, however, although numerous prisoners had been examined, the committee, who expected to hear of nothing less than of a French invasion and of a Highland rising, had succeeded in eliciting no information at all commensurate with their expectations. It was in vain that some Jacobites, who were suspected of knowing most, and whose lives were forfeited under a harsh law passed in the preceding reign, were offered their freedom on condition of making a full confession. The men persisted in maintaining that they knew of no plot in progress, of no designs to be carried into execution during the lifetime of the Queen; and they were, after undergoing various terms of purgatory in prison, finally set at liberty. That they spoke the truth has since become indubitable. The scheme of a conspiracy between the Court of St. Germains backed by the Court of Versailles, and the nobility and clans of the Highlands, had in reality no existence. The English ministry and the English Whigs received all their information from Queensberry, and Queensberry was at this time the dupe of a man, who, in the art of imposing on his fellow creatures, had no equal.

The career of Simon Frazer, who ended his life with the title of Lord Lovat, presents to the observer of human nature a study of great interest. Four times in four successive reigns did his ambition bring him in peril of the law, and three times out of the four did his dexterity extricate his neck from the halter. At the advanced age of eighty years he again embarked in treasonable practices for no nobler motives than the hope of gaining a dukedom, and this time he was unable to escape from the consequences. He was beheaded on Tower Hill. The

* Parliamentary History; Somers's Tracts.

ingenuity with which he could feign innocence stood him in good stead even upon the scaffold. His last words were a quotation from Horace in praise of the sweetness and dignity of a patriot's death, and this incident went far to redeem his character in the eyes of those numerous persons who judge of a man rather by his professions than his actions.

He was born a member, and not remotely connected with the chieftain, of the ancient and numerous clan of the Frazers, who inhabited the Highlands in the neighbourhood of Inverness. To attain to the chieftainship and the title of Lord Lovat borne by the chieftain, was from the first the leading object of his life; and in 1696 the death of this personage, who left only a widow and daughter surviving him, opened a path to his ambition. In the name of his father Simon at once claimed the honours and estates of the chieftaincy; and such was his influence with the clan that the whole body, with the exception of only two members, supported him in his claim. He was desirous of improving his title by a marriage with the daughter; but failing to get possession of her, and conceiving that the widow would serve his turn equally well, he seized upon the latter, and forced her through a ceremony which he intended for nuptials, but which the law might not unreasonably designate as a rape. By the outraged lady forgiveness was soon extended to a young and vigorous husband: but her friends were furious: her brother was no less a personage than the Marquis of Athol; and Frazer was soon made to feel what it was to rouse the resentment of the most powerful chieftain of Scotland. Every engine of the law was set in motion against him. On some accusation brought against him in his absence, he was convicted of high treason, and sentenced to death. Parties of the royal troops were despatched against him: the sheriffs of Perth, Moray, and Inverness were commanded to raise their shires; and a reward was offered to any one who would apprehend him dead or alive. Yet such was the difficulty of penetrating into the fastnesses of the Highlands, that Simon Frazer continued for some years in possession of his freedom. At length he seems to have wearied of the hunted life he led, and soon after the accession of Anne withdrew to the Continent.

The uneasiness of his circumstances now impelled him into a new scheme. From a monarch so austere and so rigidly just as William, Frazer knew that he had little to expect. The King had indeed, upon the representation of Argyle, extended to him his pardon for political offences; but he had coldly refused to allow his pardon to be pleaded in bar of any crimes Frazer might have committed against the civil laws of his country, and Frazer in consequence still stood amenable to an accusation of rape which Athol had brought against him. His hopes now turned in the direction of the Stuarts. He, like the generality of his countrymen, seems to have really entertained a strong belief that this fallen family would be one day restored; and he was therefore anxious to engage the favour of those whom he anticipated would in no long time be all powerful. He managed to obtain an interview with Mary of Modena, magnified his importance, and promised to do great things towards assisting her son to regain his rights. With the chiefs of the various Scottish clans, he assured her, he had a most extensive acquaintance; and from what they had told him, he would undertake that, if the French government could but be prevailed upon to send arms, a little money, and five thousand troops to Scotland, there would be a general rising in favour of King James. So strong were the hopes excited in the Queen's mind by these assurances that she communicated with the French ministers; and Frazer had the honour of repeating his story to Torcy, and even, it was said, to Louis himself. The conclusion at which these astute judges arrived was that it would be dangerous to rely upon the bare word of any man; but if their informant would return to Scotland, see the different noblemen whom he had mentioned as favourable to the cause of the Stuarts, and bring back to France precise assurances in their own handwriting of what they would do, something might then be undertaken.

This proposition could have been little pleasing to Frazer. An immediate return to Scotland, where his enemies were so powerful, and where he was a proclaimed outlaw, could have formed no part of his plans. His wishes, perhaps, went no further than to ingratiate himself with the Stuarts, and to obtain some post on their establishment, in which he might

remain until their restoration should open to him a triumphant return to his native country. But he had been too lavish of his promises and his boasts about his influence to be able now to recede. He accepted, therefore, a colonel's commission, a paper of instructions signed by James, which he might at his discretion show to any person whom he had hopes of engaging in the cause, a packet of letters without addresses, and a sum of money to defray the expenses of his journey. Just before setting out he found to his dismay that the French ministers had provided him with a companion in the business he had undertaken. In truth, enough had reached France concerning his character to determine his employers to keep a watch over him. A fresh plan instantly rose in the mind of the schemer. To perform his promises to the Stuarts he knew to be impossible. Indeed, no one could have been less qualified than Frazer for the work of a Jacobite agent. His reputation for unscrupulousness was widely spread; and he was the open enemy of the very man who was generally regarded as the foremost Jacobite in Scotland. He determined to see if he could purchase the favour of the established government by revealing all he knew and a great deal more than he knew of the designs of the Stuarts. As soon as he landed in his native country he repaired to his friend Argyle. Argyle instantly communicated with Queensberry, who heard with rapture that a Jacobite conspiracy was on foot, which he might have the credit of denouncing to the English court, and which, moreover, might imperil the heads of some of the great personages who had put him to so much trouble during the Parliamentary session. He lost no time in transmitting to Frazer the most gracious assurances of his protection if he would visit Holyrood. The traitor came, told his story to the Duke, and put into his hands one of the letters which he had received from James. It was addressed to the Marquis of Athol. The villain, in the hope of ruining his enemy, had taken upon himself to add this superscription to the blank missive. Two other letters, he had the impudence to say, addressed to the Dukes of Hamilton and Gordon, he had already delivered.*

* There is a vast mass of literature relating to the career of Simon Frazer, Lord Lovat. With regard to his connection with the Scottish plot see the

Queensberry repeated Frazer's story to the Ministers at London and to his friends the Whigs. The effect it produced upon Godolphin and Nottingham fell very far short of his expectations. They were not disposed to attach much credit to the assertions of a man like Frazer, even although he might have a colonel's commission and a packet of letters to show as evidence of his position at St. Germains. Athol went boldly to court, offered to be examined by the Privy Council, and succeeded in clearing himself from the suspicion of being engaged in Jacobite conspiracies, at least with his examiners. The whole affair would probably have been allowed to drop, but for the attempt just at this time of several well-known adherents of the Stuarts to land in England, which forced the Ministers, pressed as they were by the Whigs, to go through the form of a public inquiry.

The result of that inquiry might have convinced any unprejudiced mind that an organized plot such as had been described by Frazer, a compact between France and the chiefs of the Scottish clans, under which the former was to send over the Pretender with an army, and the latter were to join him with all their forces on his landing, was little better than an invention. Most of the prisoners, some of whom were supposed to stand high in the confidence of the royal exiles, persisted in declaring that they had never heard of any such design. From Sir John Maclean indeed, the chief of one of the western clans, and who had been on the establishment of the Duke of Berwick, some information was elicited. According to him the scheme of an expedition to Scotland had been long and elaborately discussed between the courts of Versailles and St. Germains. One question which had been raised was whether the Duke of Berwick or the Duke of Hamilton was the fittest person to have the command. Yet Sir John was unable to aver that any order had been issued by the French government towards carrying the scheme into execution. As far as he knew not a single French regiment had received instructions which might justify a suspicion that Scotland was to be their destination. His information amounted therefore to no more than this,—that

papers in Somers's Tracts; Lockhart's Memoirs; the Macpherson Papers; Burnet; Boyer.

Louis would, if he saw a way open to him, make use of the Pretender to trouble England; and as Louis was now at war with this country, the Whigs might have guessed as much without the assistance of Maclean.*

The Lords were in a high state of exasperation at their failure to elicit any matter of moment. They were in a rage with the Commons, who had been watching their floundering with malicious satisfaction. They were in a fury with Nottingham, who had been the first to examine Maclean, for keeping back, as they alleged, the most important points of his confessions; and Nottingham narrowly escaped a vote of censure. Fortunately for him a humbler and more helpless victim was at hand. Robert Ferguson, a man whose sole pleasure in life seemed to lie in courting misfortune, chose at this unseasonable time to issue a statement that to his certain knowledge, not a single person reputed a Jacobite was engaged in any conspiracy against the Queen. That such an insect should presume to controvert an opinion of the Lords was more than aristocracy could bear. Ferguson quickly found himself in Newgate with a prosecution for sedition hanging over him.† The Lords then came to a solemn resolution that there had been a dangerous conspiracy for raising a rebellion in Scotland and for invading that kingdom with a French force. Nothing, they added bitterly, had given so much encouragement to this conspiracy as the circumstance that the succession to the crown of Scotland after her present Majesty had not yet been declared to be in the Princess Sophia and her heirs.

The subject of the Scotch plot was then suffered to drop. Yet the subsequent history of Frazer deserves to be related. It seems almost incredible that the traitor should have imagined that his treachery had been committed with such precaution as to afford no clue to the numerous spies whom he knew had been set to watch him. He seems, however, to have deluded himself with this notion. He returned to France, and was at first favourably received by Mary of Modena. But in a little time intelligence was received as to the manner in which he had employed him-

* Burnet; who is very diffuse about this imaginary plot, and very indignant that the Tories would not believe in it. Howell's State Trials of Boucher and Others.

† Lettres Historiques; Burnet; Boyer.

self in Scotland; and the vengeance of the Stuarts was prompt and terrible. A *lettre de cachet* was easily procured from the French government, and Frazer was immured in the Bastille, from which he did not emerge much before the year 1715, when he was set free in order to assist in the Scottish insurrection.

While the inquiry into the Scotch plot was pending another cause of contention had arisen between the two Houses of Parliament.

The matter was indeed one of surpassing importance to the freedom and dignity of Englishmen. In the recent elections for the borough of Aylesbury, the returning officers had rejected the vote of a burgess named Ashby, who had frequently exercised his right before without dispute. In truth so clear was his right to vote that in the subsequent proceedings that right was not questioned. There can be no doubt therefore that his vote was arbitrarily rejected, probably from corrupt motives, as such conduct on the part of returning officers was notoriously frequent in the country.

It was thus clear that Ashby had sustained a wrong at the hands of the returning officers; but the question was whether that wrong was such as a court of law could redress. Was a right of voting for members of Parliament capable of being assessed at a pecuniary value like a right of way or of fishing? Often as that right must have been violated by the venality of returning officers during the four or five centuries which had elapsed since the institution of Parliaments, there had been as yet no instance of an individual seeking redress in the ordinary manner. In point of fact the nation was but just awakening to the value of the franchise.

Ashby, encouraged and assisted by persons richer than himself—for by one member of the House of Commons he was described as an ostler and by another a cobbler—brought an action against the returning officers, and recovered five pounds damages by the verdict of a jury at the county assizes. The defendants, however, moved in arrest of judgment that, although the issue of fact had been given against them, yet in point of law the action did not lie, inasmuch as no remedy had been provided by the law for such a wrong, nor had such an action ever been brought before. The case was argued at great length

in the court of Queen's Bench. There was a difference of opinion among the judges. Three of them, Powell, Powis, and Gould, concurred in thinking that the original plaintiff had no cause of action, and rested their conclusion on three grounds:—that he had incurred no wrong sufficiently considerable in the eye of the law; that to decide about matters of election belonged exclusively to the House of Commons; and that to allow an action of this kind would encourage such an infinity of suits against returning officers that none but knaves or beggars would undertake to perform the duties. Holt, the Chief Justice, differed entirely from his brethren; and his reasoning was clear, manly and incontrovertible. If, said he, a man has a right, he must be allowed a remedy to vindicate that right when disturbed in his enjoyment of it; and what right can be of more transcendent value than that of choosing persons to represent him in Parliament, there to concur in making laws binding on his liberty and property? As for saying that the remedy should be refused because to grant it would encourage litigation, that was no argument at all. If men would multiply injuries, of course actions would multiply too. The first principle of law was that every person who sustained an injury should be indemnified for that injury. For his own part he thought that to allow this kind of action would make returning officers more careful in observing the constitutions of boroughs, and would tend to check the partiality they too commonly showed in elections, which was a great and growing mischief to the nation.

Powell, Powis, and Gould, however, carried the decision by sheer force of numbers; and Ashby, being thus worsted in the Queen's Bench, brought his case by writ of error before the highest court of appeal, the House of Lords. That tribunal, after hearing the opinions of some of the most eminent lawyers of the day, reversed the decision which had been given in the court below; and Ashby was at length triumphant. The importance of his victory was indeed great. He had placed the franchises of Englishmen under the protection of the common law. It may perhaps be added also that he was the first person to teach his countrymen that their votes possessed a pecuniary value, and to divert the golden stream which had formerly

flowed into the pockets of returning officers into the pockets of electors.*

The equity of this decision no person would at the present day think of impugning. Yet it is not strange that the House of Commons should have been considerably startled at the establishment of a new principle. Exclusive jurisdiction upon all matters relating to elections had been ever held by the House as one of its undoubted privileges. Every step of Ashby's proceedings had been therefore watched with the most extreme jealousy. At length came the crowning decision of the House of Lords; and the Commons could no longer retain silence. Upon the 25th of January there was a grand debate in committee, upon the question whether the House possessed the exclusive privilege of determining not only upon the right of the person elected, but also upon the qualification of the elector. Almost every member of note spoke upon this occasion, and the speeches have been reported with unprecedented copiousness. The Tories descanted upon the antiquity of a privilege which had never before been called in question, and exclaimed with much bitterness against the courts of law, and especially the House of Lords, for presuming to adjudicate in matters altogether beyond their scope. If such proceedings were to be allowed, there was not a single privilege possessed by the Commons which might not come, by the regular forms of law, before the judges of Westminster Hall and the Peers. But the arguments brought forward on the other side by two Whig lawyers of the highest eminence, Sir Joseph Tekyll and William Cowper, exposed the hollowness of this reasoning to every dispassionate mind. Who, in the first instance, conferred on the voter the right of voting? It was clearly not the Commons; and such being the case, how could the House arrogate to itself the exclusive power of determining upon his qualification? The right, in fact, existed in certain freeholders, and in certain classes of persons mentioned in the various charters granted to boroughs. Now, it is a fundamental principle of law that any person disturbed in the enjoyment of a right, may have an

* I have condensed the arguments of this great case from the full reports in the Parliamentary History and Howell's State Trials. See the remarks in Hallam's Constitutional History.

action, and obtain compensation from the party who has aggrieved him. A right of voting differs in no essential respects from any other prescriptive right, such as a right of common or of cutting turf. And where can the injured person obtain redress except from a court of law? He might indeed bring the matter before the House of Commons, and the House might punish the returning officer for maliciously or corruptly refusing his vote. That punishment might have good effect in reforming the behaviour of civic authorities; but as far as the sufferer was concerned his wrong would remain unredressed; for not one shilling of damages could the House award him. It was clear then, that if justice was to be done in the land, the courts of law must be allowed to adjudicate in such matters.

Convincing, however, as this reasoning may appear now, it seems to have made little or no impression on the House. In the minds of the great majority of the members the question was merely whether they were to allow their rivals, the Peers, to sit in judgment upon their privileges. Upon a division, the party of Tekyll and Cowper could number only ninety-seven supporters against two hundred and fifteen. A series of five resolutions was forthwith drawn up, of which two resolutions were ordered to be affixed to the gates of Westminster Hall. One of them was to the effect that, according to the known law and usage of Parliament, neither the qualification of any elector nor the right of any person elected was cognizable elsewhere than before the House of Commons. Another was that Matthew Ashby, having, in contempt of the jurisdiction of the House, prosecuted an action at common law against William White for not receiving his vote, was guilty of a breach of privilege. By this intemperate step the Commons threw down the gauntlet not only to the Lords but to every court of common law in the kingdom. The Lords did not shrink from taking it up. They, in turn, passed resolutions that, by the known laws of the realm, every freeholder or other person having a right to vote, and being hindered by the returning officer, might have an action against him, and recover damages for the injury he sustained; and that the declaring Ashby guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House of Commons was an unprecedented attempt upon the judicature of Parliament, and an endeavour

to subject the law of England to the votes of the House of Commons. The aristocracy and the representatives of the people now stood fairly pitted against each other; and a serious battle seemed likely to ensue. It was high time for the sovereign to interpose. Fortunately the supplies had been all granted; and there was little chance of any good legislation emanating from parties who, like rival Popes, could think of nothing but anathematising each other. Early in April, therefore, Anne put an end to the session.*

One act, and only one deserving of remembrance, had been passed during this tempestuous session. It was a humane endeavour to migitate a calamity which, however, in spite of some subsequent efforts of Parliament, still continues to scandalise the devout in the days of Queen Victoria. The straits to which the great body of the clergy were reduced to maintain that respectability of appearance which the solemnity of their calling and the dignity of superior education rendered incumbent upon them, had from time immemorial excited much sympathy. Upon the condition of the parochial clergy in the seventeenth century a feeling mind cannot reflect without pity, nor a pious mind without horror. It was computed in the time of Charles II. that not one living in forty was of the value of a hundred pounds a year. But a hundred a year was a dream of wealth in which few men in holy orders, after the hopefulness of youth had evaporated, permitted themselves to indulge. For the chance of obtaining a living of thirty pounds a clergyman would haunt the antechambers of his patron for years, would prostrate himself in the dust before him, and if his suit were at length successful, would pour forth his gratitude in vows of eternal devotion.† The living, when granted, was not unfrequently encumbered by the obligation to take a particular wife, if the benefactor had a nurse or a cast-off mistress, whom he wished to pension. Yet doubtless the poor man had reason to be thankful; for beggarly as the pittance may seem, it was envied by hundreds of divines who had to live on incomes of five-and-twenty, twenty, twelve, even ten

* Parliamentary History.

† The Grounds and Occasions for the Contempt of the Clergy, Doctor John Eachard, 1698.

pounds a year; and these hundreds were envied by thousands who had no preferments at all, and subsisted by their wits. The trials, however, in store for the successful applicants for thirty pounds a year, were still severe. Upon such an income, which would probably purchase as much food and clothing as a hundred and fifty pounds in the present day, a bachelor might live in respectability and comfort. But Protestant communities allow to their clergymen a solace which the Church of Rome kindly withholds from her still poorer priesthood.* The married divine found his family and his expenses constantly increasing, while by no amount of diligence in his profession could he increase his earnings. The wretched parsonage-house would fall into disrepair, and had to be re-thatched if its occupant would avoid a suit in the ecclesiastical courts for dilapidations. To get even his lawful dues involved him in frequent conflicts; for the cunning, selfish clowns in his parish had often easy consciences about cheating the parson of his tithes. It may be imagined how far a clergyman, who toiled on his glebe from morning till night, who was perpetually scheming how to obtain food for his wife and children, to buy a new cassock or to pay his milk score, was capable of attending to the spiritual wants of his parishioners. It may be also conceived with what solemnity a priest could administer the Sacrament on Sundays, who but the day before had been seen by his whole congregation loading his dung-cart, or riding to market between two panniers of geese.†

A plan for augmenting the incomes of the poorer clergy had been, many years back, formed by the benevolent heart and active brain of Burnet. He had taken advantage of the footing of intimacy on which he stood with the royal family to press it upon their consideration. Among the sources of revenue possessed by the Crown was an ancient tax upon Church livings. It had been created by the Papacy in the thirteenth

* About ten years ago loud lamentations were raised in the columns of the *Times* over the insufficient incomes of the clergy of the Established Church. I remember a letter written by a Roman Catholic priest who went very bluntly to the root of the evil. "A clergyman on a hundred and fifty a year," said he, "has no more right to keep a wife than a pack of hounds."

† The position of the clergy in the time of the Stuarts is described in Macaulay's History. No one familiar with the light literature of the first half of the eighteenth century will consider his description over-coloured. Parson Adams is a fair example in all things but his erudition of the rural clergyman of the period.

century, at a time when the clergy were the greatest landed proprietors in the kingdom; and had after the Reformation been transferred to the Crown. It consisted of the first year's entire income of every ecclesiastical living after a new promotion, and of the tenth part of the income in every subsequent year. But so vast was the proportion of Church lands wrested from the clergy in the days of Henry VIII. that, upon a valuation of what they were still suffered to hold, it was found that the tax would produce little more than fourteen thousand pounds a year. The glaring iniquity of a tax levied by the Crown upon a class which the Crown itself had reduced to poverty, was perhaps the cause why no fresh valuation of Church lands was made in subsequent ages. The tax, in consequence, notwithstanding the increased incomes derived from Church livings, continued to produce no more than fourteen thousand a year. Burnet's plan was that the Crown should forego this small revenue, and that it should be used as a fund for augmenting the poorest livings. As a clergyman, he naturally thought that a tax derived from Church property could not without sacrilege be applied to other than religious purposes; and even an unprofessional mind might have felt some compunction at the uses to which the produce of the first fruits and tenths had been latterly devoted. Charles II. had found the fund convenient as a means of pensioning his mistresses and their offspring. To William, Burnet presented a memorial on the subject in 1697, and received a kind answer from the King, who desired him to talk with the Ministers about his project. But it is not likely that the great politician who was everlastingly employed in considering the state of Europe, wasted another thought upon the miseries of the country parsons of England. Burnet had soon afterwards the mortification of hearing that his Majesty had assigned a pension of two thousand a year out of the fund to the most unprincipled and the most commonly hated man in his dominions, the Earl of Sunderland, who had latterly been taken into high favour.

Upon the mind of Anne, however, which was more impressible to schemes of benevolence and piety, the arguments of the good Bishop had their proper effect. The day the Queen chose for announcing her intentions was her birthday. Upon

the 6th of February she sent a message to the Commons declaring her willingness to make a grant of her whole revenue arising out of the first fruits and tenths in aid of the livings of the poorer clergy. The project was warmly approved and supported. Some Whig members thought that more ought to be done for the clergy than was now attempted, and proposed the abolition of the taxes upon benefices, and the creation of a new fund to answer the purpose of her Majesty. With what justice, it was asked, were the ministers of the Gospel, a class of men so little blessed with worldly riches, charged not only with the ordinary taxes laid upon the Queen's subjects, but also with taxes special to themselves? But this plan was opposed by the Tories, who, however fond of exalting the privileges and pretensions of the Church, showed themselves far less disposed than the Whigs to increase the temporal comforts of its members. The clergy, they said, should be kept in dependence upon the Crown.* How poverty can tend to make men more loyal it is hard to understand; but it is less difficult to guess what was passing in the minds of the rough illiterate squires who were averse to making any substantial addition to the incomes of the clergy. By dependence upon the Crown they meant simply dependence upon themselves. Their vanity was gratified by the spectacle of the best educated man in the parish degraded by his pecuniary necessities to the position of a sycophant, who was humbly grateful for the broths and blankets which the village magnate could spare to his sick wife and children, and for the mug of ale with which he was occasionally permitted to regale himself in the servants' hall. If the parson were made a richer man he might aspire from the kitchen to the parlour, and might venture to engage in argument with his superiors.

A bill was eventually passed empowering the Queen to incorporate such persons as she should select as trustees of her bounty, and to settle upon them in perpetuity the revenue arising out of the first fruits and tenths. In the Upper House, however, difficulties arose on account of a clause which Burnet suspected the Commons had introduced for the very purpose of arousing opposition, and of throwing upon the Lords the

* Burnet.

odium which the appearance of being disinclined to this charitable scheme would certainly excite. The clause repealed the statutes of mortmain in so far as regarded the trustees of the bounty. Persons were to be henceforth at liberty to convey land by deed, or to bequeath it by will to the corporation. Such a permission naturally excited some reflections. The whole body of the clergy would now become interested in the disposition a man might make of his property. Many a clergyman, too honourable or scrupulous to beg for himself, might not hesitate to do so on behalf of his order. Was it impossible then that the same frightful abuses of religious power which prevailed abroad might be reintroduced into England, that we should again witness the spectacle of the priest hanging over the bed of the dying, conscience-stricken penitent, and exhorting him to purchase the prayers of the Church by a bequest of his lands? But a little consideration dispelled these misgivings. The Protestant priest is less efficiently armed than his Roman Catholic brother. He wants the aid of the doctrine of purgatory. A Protestant layman is instructed, or instructs himself that, when he dies, his soul departs immediately to a place where it is beyond reach of the intercessions or curses of the Church. It is unlikely, therefore, that in this country sinners should act with undue generosity towards an order of men who, he believes, can do no more for him after he is dead than his own children.

The bill, with this clause included, eventually passed the Upper House. The fund which it established has ever since gone by the name of Queen Anne's Bounty. It has since been enormously increased by grants from Parliament, and by pri vate donations, and the investments of the trustees now amount to about three millions sterling, the interest of which is still applied in much the same manner as was originally indicated. Yet it is generally admitted that the power of the trustees to relieve the distresses of the poorer clergy falls below the necessities of the case. The incomes of all endowed benefices have of course risen in proportion with the value of land; but inasmuch as the price of all the necessaries of life has risen also, it is questionable whether the clergyman on a hundred and fifty pounds a year in the reign of Victoria is better off than

the clergyman on thirty pounds in the days of the Stuarts. If we take into consideration the immense rise he has undergone in social estimation, and the increased obligation thereby entailed upon him of keeping up to the standard of gentility, the poor clergyman would be in a more painful condition now than formerly. Yet there are certain circumstances that perhaps restore equality to the balance. In the seventeenth century the great majority of the clergy seem to have sprung from the lower orders, and consequently their connections may be supposed to have been as poor as themselves. They now spring, with but few exceptions, from a class of families enriched by commerce or the lucrative practice of professions. It may be hoped, therefore, that the instances are rare where the poorly-endowed parson has neither some private patrimony, nor relations able to assist him.

Anne closed the session with a speech, in which she expressed her regret that her exhortations to unanimity had not met with the success she had wished and expected. In the course of April and May some events followed which had not been altogether unforeseen. Marlborough and Godolphin had set their faces resolutely upon weeding out from office those persons who chose to act in a spirit of rivalry to themselves. The Earl of Jersey and Sir Edward Seymour, two troublesome and violent Tories, were dismissed from their places in the household. Nottingham, finding the favourites too strong for him, soon afterwards resigned the Secretary's seals. His captiousness, his thorough-paced Toryism, his supposed sympathy with the Jacobites, and, above all, his disapproval of the war, which he lost no opportunity of parading, were perpetually drawing the administration into unpleasant quarrels with the Whigs. He had especially offended Marlborough by his opposition to a bill which the Commander-in-Chief thought would be of great service to the army. The bill empowered all justices of the peace to arrest such able-bodied men as should be found wandering about without any lawful calling or visible means of subsistence, and to hand them over as recruits to her Majesty's officers. The bill encountered some opposition in the House of Commons; but it would be fair to attribute that opposition less to the circumstance that its provisions were an outrage upon

liberty, than to the jealousy and dislike which the Tories bore to standing armies. The practice of the admirals to send out press-gangs, however harshly and arbitrarily conducted, never excited a murmur, because every Tory allowed that the efficiency of the fleet was necessary to the public safety; but the extension of the system to the army provoked a clamour about freedom and the constitution. Those who raised the cry, must, it should seem, have been ignorant of the actual laws under which they lived. Against no crime had our ancient legislators set themselves with more sternness than against "ydleness, mother and rote of all vyces." Under Henry VIII. the "sturdy and valiant beggar" found at large without licence was liable to be whipped at the cart's tail till his body was bloody. In the first year of the reign of Edward VI. an act was passed against vagabonds so inhumanly cruel that the civil authorities, more feeling than the statesmen at Westminster, shrank from carrying it into execution. The penalty for vagrancy in the time of Elizabeth was to be grievously whipped, and burnt through the gristle of the right ear with a hot iron of the compass of an inch about, unless some honest person were willing to take the offender into his service for a year. The last act which prescribed the treatment of rogues and vagabonds was passed in the fourteenth year of the reign of Charles II., and continued in force until 1744. An able-bodied man found roaming at large without employment might, under that act, be arrested, brought before the nearest justice of the peace, his name transmitted by the Court of Quarter Sessions to the Privy Council, and himself transported to the English plantations, there to be sold as a servant for a period of seven years. When such was the law it was evident that the bill for recruiting the army merely substituted compulsory service in one of her Majesty's regiments in the case of vagabonds for slavery in the colonies. In the Upper House the bill was made a pretext by the Whig peers for arraigning the character of the last commission of the peace. It was notorious that Sir Nathan Wright had, in arranging the list of justices, taken nothing else into consideration than the circumstance that the person had not been in the commission under William, and that in every county gentlemen of substance and good repu-

tation had been passed over for the sake of throwing power into the hands of the Tories. Wright, a plodding common lawyer of mean abilities, who had been Keeper of the Great Seal since the dismissal of Somers in 1700, and who had in his exalted station rendered himself an object of contempt by his foolish partisanship of the Church, his squalid, miserly ways, and his utter ignorance of chancery practice, had an uneasy hour or two on the woolsack during the debate upon the army recruiting bill. He was restricted to silence by his want of a peerage in the House, where he performed the duties of Speaker; and was compelled to listen without remedy to the sarcasms which the Lords thought proper to utter concerning him. How, it was asked, came Lord Somers to be left out of the commission for Worcestershire? A gentleman who had sat upon the woolsack with more credit than any one who came before or after him might have been thought qualified for the duties of a justice of the peace. In spite, however, of this ebullition of temper the bill was suffered to pass.*

The new appointments afforded conclusive evidence that Marlborough, notwithstanding the treatment he had met with from Rochester and Nottingham, and the upbraidings of his wife, was still disinclined to sever his connections with the party to which he had always belonged. The office of Lord Chamberlain was given to the Earl of Kent, the only person promoted who did not rank as a Tory. Sir Thomas Mansell was made Comptroller of the Household. To Henry St. John was at the same time transferred the control of the War Office and the title of Secretary at War. The place vacated by Nottingham remained empty for upwards of a month. At length the *Gazette* of the 18th of May informed the public that her Majesty had chosen the Speaker of the House of Commons, Robert Harley, to be her Secretary of State.†

The accession of Harley to office gave satisfaction to all except those extreme Whigs who were disappointed at not finding the new appointments exclusively in their favour. Harley enjoyed much the same kind of reputation as Nottingham.

* Burnet gave his hearty approval of this bill. "It will be of great advantage to the nation," says he, "if well executed."

† Lettres Historiques; Boyer; *London Gazette*; Luttrell.

His moral character was irreproachable; and as a statesman he was usually considered upright and politic, deeply read in parliamentary and constitutional law, not extreme in his views, but at heart a staunch supporter of the Church and monarchy. It is certain that he owed his elevation entirely to the esteem in which he was held by Marlborough, who seems to have condescended to a species of alliance with him. The circumstance that Harley was generally regarded as a man whose views in politics were not finally settled, joined with his high repute for wisdom and sincerity, made all factions eager to secure him as a convert. He was equally trusted by Churchmen and Dissenters, by Whigs and Tories. The information which he was in consequence enabled to give concerning the designs of parties and individuals could not but have been both extensive and valuable; and he appears to have afforded much information in secret to Marlborough. St. John also stood high in the opinion of the great man. "I am glad," he wrote from the army to Godolphin, "that you are pleased with Mr. St. John's diligence. I am very confident he will never deceive you." The Duchess, writing long after the intrigues of Harley had overthrown her husband and the Whig party, declared that from the first she saw through both men, and endeavoured to open the eyes of her husband. But the warmth of the Duchess's convictions was perpetually fusing in her recollection such things as facts and dates.*

Marlborough had been able to take but little repose during the winter. The first demand upon him was caused by the arrival in England of the King of Spain. Charles, after waiting for more than two months in Holland for an interval of favourable weather, was at length conveyed to Portsmouth under the escort of Rooke and an English fleet. He landed on the 26th of December, was received by the Dukes of Marlborough and Somerset, and immediately set out for Petworth, the splendid seat of the latter nobleman. There he found Prince George, who, to render fit honours to a crowned head, had generously devoted himself to the fatigue and perils of a journey along the almost impassable roads of Sussex. What

* Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough, and several letters of the duke at this period; Conduct of the Duchess.

his Royal Highness underwent on this little expedition may serve to show the difficulties of winter travelling in the commencement of the last century even in the case of persons of the highest rank. During fourteen hours, the time consumed between London and Petworth, the Prince never left his coach, but sat benumbed with cold, very hungry, and expecting each moment to be overturned. An accident would infallibly have happened but for the rustics of the neighbourhood, who saved his Highness from a roll in the mud by supporting the coach with their shoulders nearly the whole way from Godalming. The carriage which conveyed the royal attendants was actually upset. Similar difficulties were encountered on the journey to Windsor, where it had been arranged that the Queen should receive his Majesty. The coach containing the King and Prince was successfully hauled through the mire, but the coaches of several of the noblemen in attendance broke down, and the occupants were compelled to make their way to Windsor in the best manner they could.* Charles's stay at the castle lasted barely two days. The impression he made upon that small circle of courtiers who had the opportunity of seeing him was favourable. The youth, on account of whose pretensions to the Spanish throne the whole of Europe had plunged into war, possessed a face slightly characterised by the Austrian protuberance of the lower lip, and fair and smooth as a woman's. Although credited with being able to converse in five languages, he seldom spoke; but the gracefulness of his manners atoned for silence which he may have been tutored to observe as essential to his dignity. It was remarked of him that, without being once seen to smile, he seemed pleased with everything.† On the last day of the year he returned to Portsmouth, went on board his ship immediately, and the combined English and Dutch fleet, under the command of Rooke, shortly afterwards set sail for Lisbon. A furious storm, however, which was encountered in the Bay of Biscay, so damaged many of the vessels that Rooke found it necessary to return to Spithead, and the fleet did not leave again till the 12th of February.‡

* Boyer. † Burnet; Boyer; Lamberty.

‡ Charles is said to have displayed great courage during the storm. He refused to keep below, much, I should think, to the annoyance of the sailors, who are not fond of having the passengers on deck at such seasons.

A fortnight after Charles's visit to Windsor, Marlborough, in a season unusually boisterous, crossed over to Holland at the invitation of the States. The business which had rendered necessary an extraordinary conference was the critical position of affairs in Germany. Nothing indeed seemed more certain now than that, unless help were speedily sent to the Emperor, the states of Austria would be overrun, and the head of the Grand Alliance be compelled to make what terms he could with the enemies of the confederacy. Things were at that pass that tidings of the siege or the capitulation of Vienna were expected every day. During the winter the Elector of Bavaria had got possession of Passau, and apparently nothing hindered an expedition down the Danube but the want of a little more enterprise on the part of his Highness, and a better understanding between him and Marshal Marsin, the French commander. On the other side of Vienna the Hungarian insurgents were, in point of fact, masters of the country almost up to the walls of the capital. A combined attack by the forces of Ragotzky and by the French and Bavarians could, it was estimated, hardly fail of success. Turning towards the Rhine, the various entrances into Germany were but very insufficiently guarded against the passage of French troops. The Prince of Baden, with a force by no means considerable, held the lines of Stolhoffen; Stirum, with a handful of native militia, strove to defend the avenues of the Black Forest; and there were a few Dutch, Prussian and Hessian regiments stationed at various points on the Rhine. Through such obstacles as could be interposed by all the German commanders together the powerful French king could have no difficulty in passing succours to his troops already in Bavaria.

What chiefly paralyzed at this period the power of the Emperor and of every component state of the Empire was the want of money. In Germany, as in every poor country, soldiers were to be had in plenty; but the difficulty was to arm, pay, clothe, and maintain them in the field. Every means had been tried by the Imperial ministers that men at their wits' end could devise to raise funds. One measure, upon which Leopold had been forced by the extremity of his needs, must have caused a painful struggle in a mind so superstitious as his.

In the latter part of 1703 appeared an edict directing that all the superfluous plate in the churches should be sent to the mint, with a promise of restitution at some future period. The priesthood, overawed no doubt by the military, was disposed to submit to this command, but the Nuncio could not brook so impious a method of raising supplies, and Leopold, threatened with the papal anathema, suspended his edict to call a council of theologians.* The learned men thus summoned had the patriotism and courage to decide that the edict was a lawful one, and it was then carried into execution throughout Austria, Bohemia, and Silesia. Extraordinary assessments were at the same time levied upon the nobility and landed proprietors. A new capitation tax was, moreover, announced, under which every subject of the hereditary states became a contributory, from the officers of the Crown down to the humblest agriculturist.† Yet, notwithstanding these vigorous measures, money, either from the poverty of the people or the bad system of collection, did not flow rapidly into the Imperial treasury. The circles of the Empire were quite as much embarrassed to find means to place their contingents of troops in the field. It was to no purpose that the States-general wrote to the Diet urging upon that body the importance that the circles should evince more zeal and activity. The reply was a clamour for money. Swabia, the state in which large musters of men were most urgently required, was vexatiously inert. From Louis of Baden and the Duke of Wurtemburg came nothing but importunities for money, money, money.

That it was imperatively necessary to send pecuniary assistance to Germany was admitted by the Dutch. They tried hard, however, to throw upon England the chief burden of the contribution. Marlborough, upon his arrival at the Hague, was waited upon by a deputation from the States; and a piteous tale was told him of the financial difficulties under which the Republic was labouring. During the last year, it was said, two of the provinces had made little or no payment at all to the common treasury: all the other provinces were lamentably in arrear: the States would now have to borrow to meet their

* The Pope, it must be stated, was a strong partisan of France.
† Lettres Historiques.

expenses. It was hoped, therefore, that her Majesty would, under these circumstances, contribute in the same proportion to the needs of the Empire as she had contributed in the case of the Duke of Savoy, that is, two-thirds. Marlborough, in return, gave his Dutch visitors to understand that the English were in no better position than themselves, nor would he hold out the least hope of the Parliament consenting to any such arrangement as they proposed. That the war was pressing heavily upon the resources of the Dutch could scarcely have surprised him. The States-general, with a laudable desire to avoid as far as possible imposing permanent burdens upon the Republic, had all at once attempted to raise their revenues from two to five millions sterling; and this at a time when the disturbed condition of Europe must have materially impaired the incomes of a population so largely dependent upon trade.*

It is probable that during this visit to the Hague, Marlborough unfolded to Heinsius his plans for the ensuing season. Looking at the perils which threatened the Empire, it was clear to him that something more than money was requisite to save the head of the Alliance from the necessity of concluding an ignominious peace with France. To leave Prince Louis and Stirum any longer to their own resources, would be to endanger the interests of the whole confederacy. It was imperative that Germany should be delivered from the yoke of the French and Bavarians. But it was not upon German commanders that Marlborough was disposed to rely for the execution of a work so important. He had formed the design of marching himself to the Danube with every regiment that he could by persuasion or stratagem extort from the States-general.

It was necessary that he should proceed with the utmost caution. To have laid this plan in its simplicity before the States-general would have entailed its immediate rejection. The Dutch were indeed uneasy at the situation of their Imperial ally; but after all, the main object of the war was, in their views, to drive the French from their dangerous proximity to the frontiers of the Republic, and if possible, to secure a cordon of towns which might serve as a barrier against future encroachments of their oppressors. To send two thirds of their

* Lamberty; Lettres Historiques; Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough.

forces three hundred miles away, while a hundred thousand French lay encamped within two days' march of their territory was a policy which Scipio might have persuaded the Romans to adopt, but which Marlborough altogether despaired of recommending to Dutch prudence. The plan which he intended to suggest to the States was that he, with the British troops and the greater part of the auxiliaries, should act upon the Moselle, while Overkirk, with the Dutch and the remainder of the German regiments, remained behind to provide for the defence of the Republic. Even to this modification of his real design he foresaw that the opposition would be considerable; but he could rely upon the influence of Heinsius being exerted in his favour, and it was seldom that the influence of a magistrate so beloved and trusted was exerted in vain. As soon as the matter about the pecuniary contribution had been arranged, Marlborough returned for a short time to England.

In his own country, as in Holland, he still thought it prudent to keep his real plan a secret. Should the least rumour of it reach the States-general, he knew that he would be deterred from carrying it into execution. Should a word of warning be communicated to Louis, such measures would be no doubt taken as would ensure its failure. To the Queen and to Godolphin the secret must have been of necessity disclosed; and it seems probable that Count Wratislaw, the Imperial minister, was taken into confidence. But the Prince of Baden was permitted to continue in his impression that the Moselle would be the limit of the allied operations; nor is there evidence to show that any early intimation of the real plan was sent even to Eugene. Not until the 10th of May, and when Marlborough's head-quarters were at Ruremonde, did he write to authorise Mr. Stepney, the English resident at Vienna, to inform the Emperor, cautiously and with the strongest recommendations to secrecy, that the march would be extended to the Danube.

CHAPTER VII.

The 21st of April (New Style) found Marlborough returned to the Hague, and surrounded by his principal officers. The six weeks he had passed at home could have afforded him but little enjoyment. His wife was in a fury at the favour which, in spite of all she could urge to the contrary, her lord would persist in showing to the Tories. The hero had been compelled to depart still unforgiven, the unhappiest man in the world, and indifferent to what might befall him. As soon as he was gone, however, some sparks of pity had awakened in the breast of the virago; and before Marlborough had been a fortnight at the Hague, a letter reached him written in terms as gracious as she could bring herself to pen. The applause of multitudes, the flatteries of crowned heads, Marlborough could support with unruffled serenity; but a kind word from his wife overcame him with joy. This dear, dear letter, he wrote back, he would constantly read: he would put it into his strong box, that it might be found there when he was dead. It had restored his peace of mind, and, he believed, had saved his life. He was going up to Germany, he added, in order to leave a good name behind him, and now wished for nothing more than success.*

The allied troops meanwhile were fast assembling on the Meuse. They were divided into two portions, and it was commonly reported that one army was to remain under the orders of Overkirk in the Netherlands, while the other was to proceed with Marlborough to the Moselle. The French, under Villeroi, nearly fifty thousand strong, made their appearance in the field at about the same time. For a fortnight, the Commander-in-Chief was detained at the Hague, anxiously awaiting

* Marlborough to the Duchess, April 24, May 4; Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough.

the decision of the States-general upon the plan he had laid before that assembly, for making a campaign upon the Moselle. To many of the inhabitants of the Provinces, the design appeared unwarrantably rash; and all that could be urged about the comparative safety of the Republic, now that the towns of the Meuse had been wrested from the French and secured by ample garrisons, was insufficient to allay their apprehensions.* But Marlborough was determined to carry his point, and declared that her Majesty's orders to him were such that, if the Dutch refused to support him, he would march with the English regiments alone. The threat of a rupture with the Queen bore down all opposition; and the Duke, with powers that he deemed sufficient for the present, hastened to put himself at the head of that army with which he was secretly resolved to effect the deliverance of the Empire.*

After an interview with Overkirk at Maestricht, and an inspection of his army, which was composed chiefly of the Dutch regiments, Marlborough proceeded to Bedburg, a village about ten miles from Cologne. Here he arrived on the 18th of May, and was at once joined, according to arrangement, by his younger brother, General Charles Churchill, who had marched from the Hague with some newly-landed troops from England. His entire force, inclusive of sixteen thousand native English, scarcely reached forty thousand men; but from instructions which had been sent to various commanders on the Rhine, he expected to be joined upon his march by considerable additions. One day only was allowed the army for repose, and the advance was then resumed. Tidings now came of Villeroi. The Marshal, doubtless under the impression that the Allies were making for the Moselle, was hastening with twenty thousand men to secure the fortresses on that river. The remainder of his army was threatening to attack Huy, and Overkirk wrote in some alarm to press the Commander-in-Chief to come to a halt. Marlborough regarded such apprehensions as idle. To the States-general he wrote, entreating that body to direct Overkirk to send him a portion of his troops, for

* Lamberty. The deputies of Zealand distinguished themselves by their opposition to the Duke's plan.

† Lamberty; Boyer.

which he could not possibly have occasion. The French, he said, would be so intent upon following his own movements, that there was no possibility of their attempting anything this year in the Netherlands.*

Pending the result of this appeal the march up the Rhine was steadily continued. At the end of three days, however, a piece of intelligence reached the camp which decided Marlborough to hasten forward with the cavalry, leaving the infantry and artillery to follow at the accustomed pace. Tallard, the news was, had managed to elude the vigilance of Prince Louis, had got through the Black Forest, and had joined the Elector with twenty-six thousand men. It was evident that there was no time to lose. So largely reinforced, the French and Bavarians would hardly delay much longer their threatened expedition to Vienna. In the course of a day or two, however, a more correct and detailed account of Tallard's exploit was received, and it was found that the first report of the force under his charge had been greatly exaggerated. He had indeed, with a cunning and dexterity not unworthy of Villars, contrived to elude Prince Louis, and to convey about nine thousand men to the Elector. The Prince had been bewildered by the rapidity of his movements, or the false intelligence which he received about them. One day the Marshal was said to be at Landau; then came word that he was preparing to cross the Rhine at Strasburg; and no sooner had the German made his disposition to intercept him, than a messenger rode into camp with the information that the passage would probably be made at Huningen. Finally, Tallard crossed the river near Brisach, and so scared by his sudden appearance the raw militia who had charge of the defiles of the Black Forest, that they fled without an attempt at resistance. He had, immediately after performing this feat, returned to the army which he had left on the French side of the Rhine.†

The region of the Moselle was now passed, and Marlborough no longer thought it necessary to keep his friends in ignorance

* Lamberty. A rumour had reached the King and his marshals early in the year that the Allies were going to dispatch an army to Germany; but they seem not to have imagined that the army would penetrate further than the Moselle.

† Campagne d'Allemagne; Tallard to Chamillart, May 23; Lettres Historiques.

of his intentions. He wrote to apprise the various princes of Germany of his design to effect the deliverance of the Empire. Hitherto his movements had greatly perplexed the French. Their first thought had been that he was desirous of obtaining the towns on the Moselle; they had then imagined that he was bent on the recapture of Landau; and as the allied army still continued to advance, they had become apprehensive that an irruption into Alsace was intended.* Villeroi, in consequence, drew off the greater part of his forces from the Netherlands, and marched to join Tallard. The moment his back was turned, the courage of the Dutch statesmen rose. In answer to Marlborough's appeal for reinforcement they sent instructions to Overkirk to send him the Danish troops, amounting to about seven thousand men.

As the army continued its progress up the Rhine, no opportunity was lost by the petty princes of the neighbourhood of paying respect to the general. The smart uniforms of the English officers were the wonder of everybody. "These gentlemen," said the Elector of Mayence, "all look as if they were dressed for a ball."† The soldiers were in excellent condition and in high spirits, notwithstanding the continual marching. Their real destination could not as yet have been known to them; but they had unbounded confidence in their leader, and seem to have doubted not but that they were brought to this distance for the purpose of striking some heavy and astounding blow at the enemy. On the 20th of June the cavalry reached Mundelsheim, a village in the centre of Wurtemburg; and the day after, Eugene, whose approach had been signified by one of his officers, rode into the camp. The meeting between the two most celebrated commanders of the time was cordial. They seem to have become friends in a moment. Each of them was a model of politeness and affability: each had a thorough esteem for the judgment of the other; and in the breast of neither was there a particle of jealousy.

* Tallard to Chamillart, May 23. He could not believe that the Allies intended to push as far as Bavaria; Villeroi to the King, June 8. The allied officers were equally in ignorance of the Duke's schemes. General Kane, who was with the army, says in his Campaigns, "we halted here (Coblence) two days, after which, to the surprise of all, we crossed the Moselle and the Rhine."

† Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough.

"The Prince," wrote Marlborough to his wife, "has in his conversation a great deal of my Lord Shrewsbury, with the advantage of seeming franker." With the help of this comparison, the wisest and the most single-hearted general ever possessed by the Emperors, stands before us; for the winning manners of Shrewsbury had procured him the enviable soubriquet of King of Hearts. Marlborough took a pride in showing him the English cavalry, and Eugene freely expressed his admiration. "It does not surprise me," he observed, "that the horses, the uniforms, the belts and accoutrements of your men are so fine. I know you English are rich, and these things can be had for money. But what I love to see is the spirit displayed in their countenances. It is a sure sign of victory." Marlborough replied that the spirit his Highness so much admired was inspired by his own presence; and the compliment was perhaps not insincere, and was certainly founded on truth.*

Some polite speeches which passed between Marlborough and Prince Louis, on the arrival of the latter two days afterwards, were compliments and nothing more. Eugene had very frankly expressed his opinion of the character of this haughty, irritable, punctilious German; and Marlborough now thought less of him than ever. The Prince, still smarting with the disgrace of having been outmanœuvred by Tallard, exclaimed to the English general, "You come to save the Empire, and to give me an opportunity of retrieving my honour." Marlborough modestly answered that he had come to learn from his Highness how to serve the Emperor.† Several conferences were now held. All three commanders were agreed as to the necessity of maintaining a strong force upon the Rhine to prevent Tallard and Villeroi from crossing while matters were being settled with the Elector of Bavaria and Marsin. Much to the vexation of Marlborough, who wanted the company of Eugene, Prince Louis preferred to continue with his army upon the Danube. It fell, therefore, to Eugene to undertake the defence of the Rhine, and he departed for that purpose to Philippsburg.

On the 22nd of June a junction was effected between

* Lamberty; Marlborough to the Duchess, June 4—15; Boyer.
† Lamberty; Boyer.

the army under Marlborough and the army under Prince Louis. Churchill, whose progress had been much impeded by the heavy state of the roads, brought up, three days afterwards, the infantry and artillery; and the combined forces, now numbering at least eighty thousand men,* took post at Giengen, within seven miles of the strongly entrenched camp which the Elector of Bavaria occupied on the Danube. Here it was at first agreed that the army should remain until the arrival of some Danish horse which was on its way from Holland; and that an attempt should then be made upon Donauwerth. The possession of this city, situated close to the junction of the Danube and the Lech, would, it was evident, give to the Allies the most ample power of extending their ravages into Bavaria. The Elector was, however, alive to the importance of preserving this key to his dominions, and no sooner were the Allies in sight than Count d'Arco was despatched with twelve thousand men to secure the Schellenberg, a hill to the east of the city. The necessity of dislodging this force before it had time to complete its intrenchments was obvious even to Prince Louis; and it was therefore determined to make the attack at once. Upon the 1st of July accordingly the army moved to Amordingen, within twelve miles of Donauwerth. By arrangement the chief command devolved on either commander on alternate days. The following day it was Marlborough's turn to command, and he had fully made up his mind that the attack should, if possible, be made before nightfall.†

With the first glimpse of daylight a detachment composed of six thousand foot and nearly as many horse, all picked men from the English and Dutch regiments, moved out of camp, and were followed at five by the remainder of the army. By nine Marlborough and his officers were reconnoitring the position of the enemy on the Schellenberg. It was seen that the troops were drawn out with two fronts, as if prepared to sustain an attack from different quarters, and that pioneers were working vigorously at the entrenchments.

* Kane's Campaigns; Lettres Historiques.
† Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough.

Beyond the Danube, moreover, a camp was forming. Tents were pitched on each wing and occupied by cavalry. The centre was vacant, but manifestly reserved for a large body of infantry, which was probably on the road. These signs of the enemy's activity convinced Marlborough that every moment's delay reduced his chances of success, and he waited with great anxiety the arrival of a sufficient force to commence operations. It was not until noon that the wretched state of the roads permitted the advanced corps to reach Obermorgen; and three more precious hours were consumed in getting the artillery over the three miles which still intervened between that village and the fort of the Schellenberg. Prince Louis, who was to support the attack with the Imperial regiments, was yet far behind; and Marlborough did not consider it prudent to commence operations until he was in sight. Six o'clock came: the Imperial regiments were now discerned in the distance, and orders were therefore issued to commence the assault. Under command of the Dutch General Goor, the first detachment moved forward up the hill in six lines, every non-commissioned officer and soldier in the foot carrying with him a fascine to throw into the trench in front of the enemy's breastwork. Against a heavy cannonade from the entrenchments in front, and a galling fire upon their right flank, kept up from some works which had been erected for the defence of the city, the assailants pressed steadily onwards until, about fifty yards from the breastwork, they were stopped by a deep ravine formed by the washing of the rain. The poor fellows, dismayed at this unexpected obstacle, stood for a while irresolute on the brink, exposed to murderous discharges of grape. Goor, deservedly a favourite with Marlborough, was one of the first to fall. In some regiments the disorder soon became so perceptible that the defenders, imagining that a panic had commenced, sallied out of their entrenchments, and charged with the bayonet. They were received, however, with a coolness and steadiness upon which they had not reckoned, and were soon driven back by a battalion of English foot-guards. From behind their works they still continued to pour forth an incessant discharge upon the close ranks of the assailants. Some of the recruits, who

were making their first trial in arms, could bear it no longer; but all running was speedily checked by the vigilance of Generals Lumley and Wood, who stole behind the foot with their cavalry, and compelled the fugitives once more to face the enemy.

For upwards of an hour this terrible combat continued. Again and again the assailants charged up to the foot of the breastworks, and as many times were they driven back by the fire of the defenders. The showy uniforms of the allied officers made them good marks, and they fell fast. To Prince Louis was at length reserved the unaccustomed honour of deciding the fate of the day. His attack was, by previous arrangement, made upon a part of the entrenchments at some distance from that assailed by the English and Dutch regiments; and as the Imperialists marched up they found that part left almost unguarded. Nearly the entire force of the enemy was in fact drawn to that side of the entrenchments which had been first assailed, and the approach of a fresh body of combatants had not been calculated upon, nor had it, in the confusion, been noticed. The Imperialists, entering without resistance, took the defenders in flank. For a brief space longer the Bavarians stood their ground bravely; but Marlborough saw that the critical moment had arrived, and ordered a general charge. Infantry and cavalry were soon pouring into the intrenchments, and the enemy, giving up all for lost, fled tumultuously down the hill.

And now came one of the most terrible scenes of the war. Most of the fugitives rushed down the Schellenberg towards the Danube, with Lord John Hay's dragoons thundering in pursuit. No quarter was given; for the troopers, excited with the chase, cut right and left, and drove the terror-stricken crowd before them into the deep and rapid stream. At the bridge of Donauwerth a frightful catastrophe occurred. Count d'Arco, the commander, had just time to make his escape across the river. Behind him came thousands struggling to get over the narrow wooden structure. The bridge gave way beneath the weight of numbers, and men, horses, and cannon were all precipitated into the Danube. Many who remained on the banks threw themselves, in their despair,

into the river; and not a few were drowned in the attempt to reach the opposite shore by swimming. The loss on both sides was, in proportion to the forces engaged, extraordinarily great. More than one thousand men were killed on the part of the Allies. The list of the wounded comprised the names of some of the principal officers, and of two thousand five hundred of their soldiers. The French and Bavarians undoubtedly sustained a much greater loss. Their number on the Schellenberg was about twelve thousand. Three thousand only regained the camp of the Elector.*

That excitable and irresolute personage was, by the defeat of his troops, thrown into a fever of apprehension. Hurrying out of his strong camp on the Danube, he set off to place his army where he deemed it would be in comparative safety, under the cannon of Augsburg. All thoughts of preserving the very important city of Donauwerth were abandoned. To the garrison of that place he despatched orders, on the day following the attack, to blow up the fortifications, to burn the houses, and then to join him with all possible speed. Happily for the citizens the prompt advance of the Allies prevented this cruel scheme from being carried into execution. The garrison had time for little more than to repair the bridge, to pass over it, and to burn it behind them. In another hour Donauwerth would have been a heap of ashes; for as the Allies entered they found straw laid in many of the buildings, and the fire actually kindled in some of the magazines. The flames were soon extinguished, and a supply of provisions and ammunition was obtained, which was a valuable reinforcement to the stores of the allied army.†

Marlborough's chief thought now was to reduce the Elector to the necessity of abandoning the French alliance before help

* For details of the battle of the Schellenberg or of Donauwerth, see the Lettres Historiques; Boyer; the letters of Marlborough and Hompesch to the States-general in Lamberty; Marlborough to Secretary Harley in the Despatches; Doctor Hare's Journal in Coxe; Campagne d'Allemagne and the pièces relatives; Kane's Campaigns, in which the loss of the Allies is stated at five thousand killed and wounded; St. Simon. The first accounts of the battle which reached Tallard were that nearly all the allied generals had fallen. It is still contended (Sismondi, Histoire des Français) that the loss of the French and Bavarians was far less than that of the Allies.

† Campagne d'Allemagne; Marlborough to the States-general and to Harley, July 4; Kane's Campaigns.

should reach him from France. Just before the attack of the Schellenberg an officer, despatched by Eugene, had reached him with the intelligence that Tallard was preparing to advance with a considerable force through the defiles of the Black Forest. Not a moment, therefore, was to be lost. On the following day the army crossed the Danube, and four days afterwards encamped on the soil of Bavaria.

The fickle sovereign of this thriving and beautiful country was now in a state bordering on distraction. The defeat of some of his best troops had filled him with apprehensions for the safety of the remainder of his army, although protected by the cannon of Augsburg, and in a position which his military counsellors deemed completely impregnable. He had fears for his own wife and family, whom he had left in Munich; and he could not but commiserate his innocent subjects, whom he saw doomed to expiate with their persons and property the line of policy he had thought proper to adopt. A word of submission he knew would stop the meditated ravages of the Allies; but that word he could not bring himself to utter. Bound as he was to the King of France, and scrupulously as his ally had fulfilled every promise made to him, he felt that he could not without dishonour desert the cause in which he was embarked. Despair and hope predominated alternately in his mind, as at one time he heard of the progress of the Allies, and at another received cheering messages from Tallard that he was marching to his assistance with all the speed he could make. He at length decided to try whether he could amuse the enemy for a few days by a negotiation. At his desire a meeting took place between Count Wratislaw and his secretary at Aicha, and in four days a treaty was arranged, under which he was to abandon the French alliance, and in consideration of a subsidy to furnish twelve thousand men for the service of the Emperor. This treaty the secretary assured the Count his master would make no difficulty of signing; but the event proved otherwise. The Elector had meanwhile passed from a state of despair to one of confidence and exultation. Tallard had reached Ulm with thirty-five thousand men. Villeroi, with another large army, was preparing to follow him. With such splendid additions to the forces already at his disposal it was no longer necessary to

think of making terms. The Allies would soon be enclosed in a net, and it would be for them to entreat permission to retire from a country into which they had been rash enough to venture. When that event should occur, and it seemed certain to occur, all his dreams of ambition would be realised. Vienna would be captured: the hereditary States of Austria would be overrun and pillaged: the Emperor would be at his mercy: he would become without dispute the first prince in Germany.*

Marlborough, meanwhile, had not been diverted from his projects by the advances of a prince who was notorious for not continuing in the same mind for a week together. His army had penetrated far into Bavaria; and in the hope that the Elector might be touched by the sufferings of his subjects, the country had been given up to military execution. Parties of horse were despatched in all directions with orders to pillage and destroy. Fifty villages were soon in flames, and their unfortunate occupants flying with their families and flocks to the shelter of the woods. No terms of ransom were accepted. To some deputies who came from certain towns to offer a contribution the stern answer was returned, that the forces of the allied powers had come to Bavaria not to get money, but to reduce its sovereign to reason. It is creditable to Marlborough that, from a duty which a French general would have executed with perfect indifference, his private feelings revolted. "It is so contrary to my disposition," he wrote to the Duchess, "that nothing but absolute necessity could have brought me to consent to it. These poor people suffer for their master's ambition. There has been no war in this country for above sixty years, and the towns and villages are so clean that you would be pleased to see them. My nature suffers when I see so many fine places burnt, and that must be burnt, unless the Elector will hinder it." † The ravages of the Allies were extended to the neigh-

* Marsin to Tallard, July 14; numerous letters in the despatches; Lamberty. Very liberal terms were offered the Elector, the restitution of his dominions, the government of the Netherlands, and a large sum of money, of which he was in great need.

† Marlborough to the Duchess, July 30, August 10. Macaulay frequently describes Marlborough as possessing "a cold heart," "a heart of marble." A person must, I think, be very prejudiced who can read his private letters given in Coxe's Memoirs without forming quite a different opinion. His disposition was kind and gentle towards every one. I imagine that Macaulay confounded his moral feelings with his intellect, which was in truth, singularly cool. But a cold heart is not always the concomitant of a cool head.

bourhood of Munich. The inhabitants of that capital were in daily expectation of seeing the whole army of the invaders before their walls; and the Electress, overcome by terror, wrote to entreat her husband to make his submission. Munich, however, escaped the calamities which appeared to threaten it. The garrison consisted of eight thousand men; and the allied army was destitute of the artillery requisite to reduce a city of which the means of defence were so considerable.

In spite, however, of the keen trials to which the Elector was subjected, he remained inflexible; and the position of the Allies now became perplexing. In a few days it was certain that the Elector would be joined by Tallard, and all chance of subduing him would then be at an end. His camp was reconnoitred; but with a marsh in front of it, with its strong entrenchments, and with the assistance which the army would derive from the cannon of the city, it was considered hopeless to attempt an attack. At this conjuncture Eugene repaired to the camp of Marlborough. The Prince, although powerless to prevent the passage of the Rhine by so large a body of troops as Tallard had under his command, had followed the march of his adversary; and his fifteen or eighteen thousand men were now posted on the Danube between Hochstett and Donauwerth. A conference was held, and the three allied commanders discussed the position, which was now becoming visibly critical. Should the army continue in Bavaria it was likely that the Elector would return to the Danube, would drive away the small force of Eugene, and intercept the communications of the Allies with northern Germany. On the other hand, to retire from Bavaria might entail the loss of a country which was already virtually conquered. It was at length decided to secure some stronghold by which the Allies might retain their hold upon the dominions of the Elector. Ingolstadt, a fortress of some strength on the Danube, which had successfully resisted Gustavus Adolphus, was considered to be well adapted for the purpose. It was suggested to Prince Louis that he should undertake the siege, and to the infinite joy of Marlborough and Eugene, who longed to be rid of an embarrassing colleague, his Highness made no objection to turn his talents in this direction. He shortly afterwards took his departure with sixteen thousand men; and

it was then arranged that Marlborough should recross the Danube, and unite his army to that of Eugene.*

And now came intelligence that compelled Marlborough to quicken his movements. The Elector, Tallard and Marsin were marching with their whole forces towards the Danube, obviously with the intention either of surprising Nuremburg and Nordlingen, which contained the magazines of the allied army, or at least of cutting off communication with those cities. This movement of the Elector and the marshals has been unsparingly censured by French critics. Why not, it was said, have remained purely on the defensive? It was impossible that the Allies could remain any longer in Bavaria. Their wilful destruction of towns and villages had reduced the region in their neighbourhood to a desert. If they advanced further into the country they would increase their distance from their magazines. And with those magazines their communications were already precarious. They had the command of but one bridge over the Danube, that of Donauwerth; and between Nordlingen and Donauwerth the roads were so insufficiently guarded that every convoy ran the risk of being waylaid. The first principles of the military art, nay, common sense itself, should then have suggested to the Elector and the marshals the propriety of posting themselves in some position where they could not be attacked, and of leaving principally to time and famine the work of driving the enemy from the country. Instead of adopting this prudent course their vanity and presumption impelled them to abandon all shelter, and to seek a situation in which they could not avoid a general engagement. That the Allies wanted nothing so much as an opportunity of fighting should have been evident to them. A victory was at this crisis essential to their safety.†

A few hours after intelligence of the Elector's march had been received a strong detachment of cavalry was on the road to the assistance of Eugene. On the following morning, the 10th of August, Marlborough followed with the remainder of the army. By noon of the 11th, the whole body had crossed

* The Marlborough Despatches.

† Mémoires du Marquis de Feuquières contenant ses maximes sur la guerre St. Simon.

the Danube, passed Donauwerth, and effected a junction with the forces of the Prince. The two commanders encamped that night in front of a brook called the Kessel, a tributary of the Danube.

The following day Marlborough and Eugene rode forward with a guard of cavalry to reconnoitre. They mounted the tower of Dapfheim church, and saw with a thrill of delight the French and Bavarian soldiers pitching their tents behind the bark of the Nebel, a little stream at a distance of about three miles from them. What the object of their commanders might be it was not easy to guess. It was plain, however, that they were advancing in utter ignorance that the whole force of the Allies was in front of them. Long afterwards the contents of the French archives revealed what was then passing in the Gallo-Bavarian camp. The Elector, it seems, was in such high spirits, and so prepossessed with a notion of his superiority over the Allies now that Tallard had joined him, that he ridiculed every suggestion of danger. He was confident that he had before him only the eighteen thousand men of Eugene, for he had received letters from Donauwerth apprising him that the Duke of Marlborough was the only individual who had joined the Prince. Marsin was just as badly informed, and just as confident as the Elector. Tallard, according to his own relation, was not without apprehension that they were incurring a great risk by exposing themselves in an open plain; but Tallard was far too weak and too courtly a man to maintain his opinion against a sovereign prince. It was not until the battle of Blenheim had fairly commenced that the truth flashed upon the unfortunate commanders that the entire army of Marlborough had joined that of Eugene, and that they had to deal with a force numerically equal to their own.*

The first design of the allied generals was to take advantage of the manifest ignorance of their adversaries, and to attack them while in the confusion incidental upon settling down in their new camp. But on second thoughts this design was abandoned. The day was far advanced, and their troops were fatigued with the long marches. It was decided therefore to defer the attack until the following day. That night the two

* Campagne d'Allemagne.

generals took but little repose. Each repaired to his own quarters to issue the necessary instructions to his officers. Some of these gentlemen were of opinion that the army ran too great a hazard in attacking the enemy in the position which it at present occupied. The men, they urged, would have to ford a stream, and to struggle through a difficult and perhaps impassable marsh under fire. But Marlborough's mind was fully made up, and he had not now the Dutch deputies to control his actions. The state of affairs, he answered, rendered it absolutely imperative that they should fight, and that they should win. If this opportunity of fighting were declined no alternative would be left to them but to retire from Germany, for Villeroi was advancing into Wurtemburg, and would soon be between them and their magazines. He admitted that his troops would have great difficulties to contend with; but he relied upon their courage and steadiness to overcome all obstacles. For success he in private prayed long and earnestly, and towards morning received the Sacrament from the hands of his chaplain. An hour after daybreak Eugene repaired to his tent, and the two generals sat calmly discussing their plans until it was time to march.*

At two in the morning of the 13th of August the drums were beating the *reveillé* through the allied camp. The assembly sounded an hour afterwards, and in a few minutes the march began. Eugene's army was on the right, and consisted of nearly nine thousand cavalry drawn from the various circles of the Empire, and of an equal number of Danish and Prussian infantry. The force under Marlborough was much greater. His infantry were twenty-four thousand; his cavalry upwards of ten thousand strong; and of these numbers seven thousand of the former and two thousand of the latter were British. The Dutch battalions and squadrons were about equally numerous; and Hanoverian and Hessian troops made up the remainder of the left wing. Each army marched in four columns, two of infantry and two of cavalry, while fifty-two pieces of artillery brought up the rear. The two commanders, attended by their guards, rode togther on the left in advance of the columns.

* Kane's Campaigns; Coxe's Memoirs. According to Kane, Marlborough, on mounting his horse, observed, "This day I conquer or die."

Upon a rising ground near the hamlet of Wolperstettin, and at a distance of rather less than a mile from the Nebel, the generals halted, and took a survey of the enemy's camp. All was quiet there: not a sign was observable that any attack was apprehended. In the village of Blenheim, which stood near the Danube, was seen flying Tallard's standard, and from that point the eye ranged over a long line of tents extending from the river full two miles and a half as far as the wooded heights overhanging the village of Lutzingen. These, it was evident, were the quarters of the Elector, and not far distant, at the hamlet of Oberglauh, the quarters of Marsin. All along the front of the encampment ran the Nebel, a stream neither broad nor deep, but with rather precipitous banks, and with the ground adjoining it very marshy in places. At least a thousand yards, however, intervened between this brook and the tents of the enemy. One grave error in the disposition of the French and Bavarians was instantly detected by the experienced eyes of Marlborough and Eugene. The Elector and Tallard had each arranged his camp in apparent independence of the other. The cavalry on Tallard's left touched the cavalry on the Elector's right, so that the masses of infantry, except about seven thousand men in Oberglauh, were posted at Blenheim and Lutzingen at the two extremities of the position, and divided from each other by nearly the whole body of horse.

It was now six o'clock, and the columns, which had been marching along a gorge between a wood and a marsh, began to emerge into the open. A slight haze, the precursor of a hot, bright day, still hung over the ground, and concealed the numbers of the advancing force; but in a few minutes the outposts of the enemy had caught the alarm. Fire was hastily set to the hamlets in which they were stationed, and the men retreated across the Nebel. In the Gallo-Bavarian camp, now plainly discerned by the whole allied army, which was rapidly extending its front, all was commotion. Drums were beating, cavalry and infantry assembling, generals and staff-officers hurrying to and fro, and artillerymen dragging their cannon into position. At eight fire was opened from some of the batteries upon the pioneers who were laying bridges across the Nebel, and was after a while returned by the Allies from as many

pieces as could be brought to bear. Marlborough himself superintended the disposition of his artillery, and while making the rounds of the batteries had a narrow escape of his life. A cannon-ball struck the ground close to his horse, and covered him with earth and dust.

The two generals had now completed their plans. Eugene was to attack Lutzingen, while Marlborough pushed his men across the Nebel, and fell upon the centre and right of the enemy. The Prince took his departure, promising to send word when he was ready to begin. The difficulties of the ground compelled him, however, to take a longer circuit to reach his position than he had expected, and for hours the troops on the left impatiently awaited the signal to advance. But the long interval was advantageously employed in completing and strengthening the bridges across the Nebel. The resistance of the enemy to this work was limited to a distant cannonade of the men engaged in it. It was evidently Tallard's design to permit a portion of the troops to cross the rivulet, and then to charge that portion with overwhelming numbers.

One o'clock came, and an officer arrived with the information that the Prince was prepared to begin the attack. Marlborough thereupon issued his orders, and in a few minutes the whole of the left wing was advancing. A division under Lord Cutts, which was destined for the attack on Blenheim, was the first to cross the Nebel. General Rowe, on foot, led up the first line, and advanced to within thirty paces of some palisades erected in front of the village, when a terrible discharge of grape and musketry spread death through his ranks. The brave officer, however, calmly continued his march, and struck his sword upon the palisades before permitting his men to return the volley. A gallant but brief struggle to carry the obstructions ensued; but the fire from the enormous masses of infantry behind them was too terrible to be long endured, and as the men were wavering they were charged by three squadrons of gens d'armes, and put completely to the rout. Rowe fell mortally wounded by a musket-ball. The two officers next him in command were killed in endeavouring to carry him off the ground. A third part of the men composing the first line was

left dead or wounded in front of the palisades. The survivors were indebted for their escape to the timely charge of some Hessian regiments, who fell upon the gens d'armes and drove them back into the village. A fierce encounter betwen the French and allied cavalry followed. The gendarmerie returned in increased numbers, and were met by some squadrons, which Lumley, to whom Cutts had appealed for succour, sent across the Nebel in all haste to the assistance of his friend. But the contest was too unequal; and in the end the allied horse, overpowered by immense numbers and galled by the incessant fire kept up by the infantry within the palisades, was borne back to the edge of the rivulet.

From the farther bank of the Nebel, Marlborough had anxiously watched the gallant but futile efforts of his men. It was now plain that Blenheim was too strongly guarded to be carried by assault. He sent orders therefore to the commanders in this part of the field to keep up a fire upon the village, but to expose themselves as little as possible. All his efforts were now directed to piercing the centre of the enemy. Infantry and cavalry were soon crowding over the stream, the infantry at the planks which had been prepared for them, and the cavalry at every point where their horses could obtain a footing, the dense masses being enfiladed all the time from the batteries of the enemy. After struggling through a morass some English squadrons succeeded in reaching the firm land. While yet in disorder they were charged by a cloud of hostile cavalry, and forced to retreat behind the Prussian horse composing the second line. The battle, however, soon became more equal as regiment after regiment scrambled over the stream, struggled through the swamp, and came up to the support of their comrades.

Marlborough was now forced to hasten to a point a little higher up the Nebel, where terrible disasters had occurred. The Danish and Hanoverian cavalry, after passing the brook, had been at once led to the attack of Oberglauh. This hamlet was, from its situation near the centre of the Gallo-Bavarian army, one of the most important points on the field. It was strongly guarded and tenaciously defended. In a few minutes the Danes and Hanoverians were flying back over the Nebel,

pursued by the whole body of Marsin's cavalry. The Dutch infantry, which next advanced to the attack, fared even worse. Scarcely had a thousand men formed on the opposite bank of the stream than the French foot came pouring out of the hamlet, and drove the thousand like sheep before them. Their commander, the Duke of Holstein Beck, was left mortally wounded in the hands of the enemy. Conspicuous among the French regiments which made this terribly successful charge was the Irish brigade.

Marlborough had by this time reached the spot. At the head of three fresh battalions he passed the Nebel, posted those battalions in such a position as to keep in check the hostile infantry in Oberglauh, saw them sustained by cavalry and artillery beyond all danger of being again repulsed, and then returned to his post of observation on the left.

The battle had now raged for upwards of three hours, and at the expiration of this period the whole of Marlborough's troops had crossed the Nebel, and had been drawn up in regular order to confront the enemy. The cavalry, which were posted in advance, were formed in two lines. The infantry behind them were formed also in two lines, but with several spaces intervening to permit of the cavalry passing through if beaten. That the allied commanders should have succeeded in getting their whole force over a difficult stream and an entangling swamp in the face of an army superior in numbers, and perhaps superior also in the prestige it enjoyed, for the activity and energy of the French cavalry had long been the terror of every nation in Europe; that the allied army should have been allowed to make the passage without any further resistance than a feeble cannonade, is one of those things, says St. Simon, that posterity will never believe. The truth seems to be that Tallard was so little in expectation of being atttcked, that when the Allies came upon him he fairly lost his senses. The only defensive measure he appears to have taken was that of collecting the whole of his infantry in and about the village of Blenheim. Upon his cavalry he certainly reckoned for charging and overthrowing the hostile ranks as they successively passed the Nebel; but it is equally certain that no systematic plan of defence was adhered to, and that the officers of the cavalry,

being generally left without orders, made only partial and desultory efforts to hinder the passage of the Allies.

For more than half an hour the two armies remained facing each other at short distance. The interval was busily employed by Marlborough in preparations for his grand attack, and no less busily by Tallard in preparations to receive it. To sustain his cavalry the Marshal interspersed with them three brigades of infantry. Against these a fire was kept up from some pieces of artillery which had been hurried over the stream on pontoons; but the French bravely stood their ground. It was five o'clock before the grand and decisive movement was made. The advance sounded, and the first line of the allied cavalry moved steadily forward up the rising ground, on the brow of which were ranged their adversaries. It was brought to a stand by the pertinacious fire of the French infantry regiments, and was, after hesitating a few moments, thrown back upon the second line by a vigorous charge of some squadrons of the enemy. The artillery, however, continued to play upon these infantry regiments, and its fire was supported by three battalions of Hanoverians, which had been brought forward and drawn up opposite to them. Beneath the incessant and murderous tempest of balls which now fell upon them the French infantry soon began to show symptoms of wavering. Marlborough saw his opportunity, and his trumpets again sounded the advance to his cavalry. Among the troops opposed to the allied horse were several corps of the splendid gendarmerie of France; but on this day it has been admitted that they did not evince that courage and determination which had rendered them famous. At the approach of the enemy several squadrons disbanded and fled, leaving the infantry regiments to be surrounded and cut to pieces. Tallard made one desperate effort to retrieve the fortune of the day. At the head of all the squadrons he could rally he charged the victorious Allies. The shock was firmly received: he himself was wounded in the encounter; and in another minute the battle was over. A panic had set in. The whole of the French cavalry composing the right wing of the Gallo-Bavarian army was flying in all directions. Blenheim, in which village was posted the major part of the infantry, was hemmed in on every side. Marsin's

cavalry had fallen back to prevent the Elector and himself from being taken in flank by the victors.

In another part of the field the Allies had meanwhile fought with equal valour, but not with the same degree of success. Owing to the difficult character of the ground Eugene had found himself unable to commence his attack upon the Elector's position in front of Lutzingen until an hour after the battle had commenced on the left. The Bavarians, encouraged by the presence of their sovereign, who, always high-spirited and chivalrous in the field, kept riding up and down the ranks of his men, stood their ground nobly. Three times did the Prince cross the Nebel at the head of the Imperial cavalry, and thrice had he the pain of being borne back amid the rout of his troops. The Elector and Marsin, however, after witnessing the total destruction of Tallard's army, thought only of saving themselves. Still in perfect order they began their retreat in the direction of Dillingen; and so well was that order maintained that night came to their assistance before the efforts of Eugene had succeeded in disturbing it.

But although the Elector and Marsin succeeded in getting off with unbroken ranks, the destruction of Tallard's army was as complete as any conquerors could desire. Part of the fugitive cavalry took the direction of Hochstadt, and was pursued by the Dutch general Hompesch. Marlborough, with the principal portion of the allied squadrons, drove the remainder before him towards the Danube. Great numbers, in the wildness of their terror, dashed down the steep bank of the river, and perished in the desperate attempt to swim their horses over the broad and swiftly-rolling stream. Tallard himself, with his aides-de-camp and several officers of high rank, was borne along with the crowd that was spurring in this direction. He did not even yet despair of making a good retreat if he could but get his infantry, upwards of twelve thousand strong, and as yet quite untouched, out of Blenheim. He sent orders to the officer in charge to march out with all speed, but his messenger was unable to reach the village, which was, in truth, by this time closely blockaded. As the Marshal remained near the hamlet of Sonderheim anxiously awaiting the return of this messenger, he and his staff were suddenly enveloped by a

Hessian regiment. The rich cross belonging to the order of the Holy Ghost which he wore upon his breast at once marked him out as an important personage. He admitted his rank, surrendered his sword to an aide-de-camp of the Prince of Hesse, and was conducted to Marlborough.

It yet remained, however, for the conquerors to deal with the twenty-seven battalions, which, together with three squadrons of dismounted dragoons, had been shut up in Blenheim. Clerambaut, the chief officer in command, had been strictly ordered by Tallard to retain his station till further orders. As the battle progressed, however, his impatience to learn what was going on became uncontrollable. He ventured almost alone out of the village, got entangled with the rout, was swept down to the Danube, and drowned in the attempt to cross the river. Clerambaut having disappeared, the command devolved upon an officer named Blansac, who waited with the utmost impatience for orders. But no one came to him, and at length he saw to his dismay the village surrounded by hostile cavalry and infantry, and every available outlet secured. And now the French made some desperate but ineffectual struggles to escape. They were repulsed at every point. They tried the road to Sonderheim, and found it guarded by the Scotch greys. They made a sortie in the direction of the Nebel, and were driven back by the dragoons of General Ross. Still, however, they stood obstinately at bay, and beat back all attempts to penetrate into their inclosures. It was, however, evident to Blansac that the resistance could not be prolonged. That twelve thousand men could, without further defence than that provided by palisades and a few poor buildings, some of which were already on fire, continue to maintain themselves against the efforts of a victorious army four times their own number and amply provided with artillery, it was idle to hope. A small party of officers went out to ascertain from Lord Orkney what terms would be granted. Their answer came from the lips of Churchill. It was now past seven o'clock, that general said sternly. He would waste no more time. The troops in the village must instantly lay down their arms and surrender unconditionally, or the attack should be renewed. This reply, it seems, was overheard by a

French prisoner of rank, the Marquis de Denonville, who had perhaps officiated as interpreter. He himself was thoroughly convinced of the futility of any further resistance being attempted by his countrymen, and he was anxious to avert unnecessary bloodshed. He offered, therefore, to go upon his parole into the village, and to exert his influence to obtain a surrender. The offer was accepted, but the eloquence of Denonville was scarcely needed to convince both officers and troops of the necessity of their submitting. There was but a single exception to this unanimity of opinion. The officers of the regiment of Navarre refused to put their signatures to a capitulation which they regarded as disgraceful. The common soldiers exhibited their grief by tearing and burying their colours. By eight o'clock the whole body had become prisoners of war.

This transaction has been regarded by Frenchmen and Englishmen from very different points of view. It is not surprising that the vainest nation in the world should have exclaimed against the cowardice of officers who could, after a resistance lasting little over an hour, deliver up twelve thousand of the best troops of France in a body to the enemy. The unfortunate men whose names were attached to the capitulation were twitted to the end of their lives with examples drawn from ancient history of commanders who preferred death to dishonour. In England, however, the conduct of Blansac and the rest has been judged more charitably. It has been generally admitted that escape from the village was impossible, and it is scarcely regarded as the imperative duty of an officer to commit suicide and to sacrifice the lives of his men because the fortune of war has gone against him.*

In this manner was fought, as well as can be collected from many independent and often seemingly discordant narratives, that battle which has taken its name in England from the

* The accounts of the battle are numerous and so discrepant as often to be utterly irreconcilable. My narrative is compiled from Hare's Journal in the Marlborough Despatches; the despatches of the various commanders to their governments; the Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Burnet; Kane's Campaigns. The author (an eye-witness) remarks, "No general did ever behave with more calmness of temper and presence of mind than did the Duke on this occasion, giving his orders with all the coolness imaginable." On the French side are the Campagne d'Allemagne, and the letters of Tallard and Marsin to the king; the criticisms of Feuquières, and the anecdotes of St. Simon.

village of Blenheim, and in France from the adjacent town of Hochstadt. It was the most splendid victory in which the English had participated since Agincourt, the most humiliating reverse which had befallen the French arms since Pavia. It brought to a close the long period of military prosperity which Louis had enjoyed. From the hour when he became thoroughly acquainted with the extent of his disaster, he was a changed man. His dreams of conquest and ambition were at an end. Victory had departed from his standards. He could no longer look with the same confidence to the prowess of his soldiers or the genius of his marshals. It was plain that his arrogance and disregard of the rights of mankind, had evoked an avenging spirit that was mightier than he; and for the first time the overbearing despot comprehended that his power had limits. To continue the struggle with the allied powers of Europe was indispensable: but on his part it was no longer a struggle for victory, but for the opportunity of making an honourable peace.

As the light was failing, Marlborough, tearing a leaf out of a note-book, which he seems to have borrowed from some commissary, scrawled a few lines to his wife, and delivered the missive to Colonel Parke, one of his aides-de-camp. "I have not time to say more," ran this interesting and still extant epistle, "than to beg of you to present my humble duty to the Queen, and to let her know that her army has had a glorious victory. M. Tallard and two other generals are in my coach, and I am following the rest." That night Marlborough passed in a little water-mill near the town of Hochstadt. The next morning he and Eugene paid a visit to Tallard, and found that unfortunate commander surrounded by several of his fellow-captives, very dejected, and suffering from a wound in the hand, but like a true Frenchman, exceedingly talkative, and disposed to attribute his misfortunes to any cause rather than to his own blunders. It eased his heart to discuss the events of the battle, and to prove that, but for the supineness of this general, or the poltroonery of that regiment, he would have infallibly been the conqueror. "Had your Grace," said he, in an effusion of vanity, "deferred your visit to us a day longer, the Elector and I would have waited upon you. We would have marched

against you the day before, had we not been informed by four prisoners that you had been reinforced by Prince Louis."*

So spoke Tallard; and it is not unlikely that the Gallo-Bavarian army would, if let alone, have continued to advance. The evidence of the Marshal's own letters proves clearly that he and the Elector imagined that they had only the army of Eugene to contend with, and that up to the very commencement of the battle they were ignorant of the fact that the whole army of Marlborough had crossed the Danube, and reinforced that of Eugene. The modesty of the conquerors, the handsome person of the English commander, and the desire they both expressed to do all in their power to render captivity easy to their prisoners, completely won the hearts of the French officers.

After this visit of condolence, Marlborough rode over the field of battle. It presented the usual horrors. The Mother Rosses, a sisterhood of devils, which in that age invariably followed, like vultures, the track of an army, had been already at their work. The dead of both armies lay on the ground stripped of every article of clothing. The returns subsequently made by the allied commanders admitted a loss of four thousand five hundred men killed, and of seven thousand five hundred wounded. The losses of the French, it is, as usual, impossible to compute with any approach to accuracy, partly from the absurd vanity of the commanders, and partly from their disposition to gloss over every account which was likely to reach the eye of their master. The prisoners alone, however, amounted to fifteen thousand men, and twelve hundred officers. Two German regiments included in this amount, and numbering three thousand men, were easily prevailed upon to change masters, and to join the victorious army. The remaining prisoners were distributed about the camp until some arrangement could be effected with the French authorities that would admit of their being released. Tallard and a few more gentlemen of high rank were soon afterwards despatched to Frankfort, where they were to remain until Marlborough was ready to return to England.

The work of the allied commanders in Germany was now accomplished beyond their most sanguine hopes. There could

* Hare's Journal.

be no further apprehensions about the safety of the Empire. All that remained to be done in this part of Europe was to chase the invaders back over the Rhine, and to sever, if possible, the ties between the Elector and the French king. Several causes, however, prevented the allied army from following up closely the fugitives. It was encumbered by its host of prisoners: it was short of bread through a want of carts to convey the supplies from the magazines; and it was thought desirable to allow time for the slightly wounded to recover.

In the meantime Marlborough carried on a negociation with the Electress of Bavaria, who had taken refuge in Munich. He offered to spare the dominions of her husband from all ravages, and to guarantee to herself and her family a safe asylum in the capital, upon condition that Ulm and the other garrison towns of the Electorate were given up to the Allies. The lady evaded and procrastinated; and the Duke, after waiting several days for a definite answer, was compelled to leave the negociation in the hands of Wratislaw, and to hasten after his troops, who were already several marches in advance.*

The design now formed by the commanders was to retrace their steps to the Rhine, and to lay siege to Landau. The recovery of that town would enable them to quarter their troops in its neighbourhood during the winter, so as to be in readiness to invade France with the first months of fine weather. It was intimated accordingly to Prince Louis that he need trouble himself no further to pursue the siege of Ingoldstadt. The French once out of the country it was certain that every town in Bavaria would submit of its own accord. His force therefore would be better employed in conducing to the main design. The Prince, though doubtless in bad humour at his ill-fortune in being absent at a period when his coadjutors were covering themselves with glory, made no objection to this arrangement. He repaired to the camp of Marlborough and Eugene, and wisely determined to lose no more opportunities of winning renown by separating from those prosperous commanders.

* Marlborough to the Duchess, August 21 and 25, September 1 and 5. These letters are certainly not those of a cold-hearted man.

Two days after the battle the Elector and Marsin, their soldiers, haggard and dispirited by defeat, long marches and scarcity of food, arrived in the neighbourhood of Ulm. That city had become the abode of mourning and misery. In it was collected all that survived of Tallard's army. Every house was filled with wounded men: every village churchyard on the roads from Blenheim had its freshly-dug graves. Yet the defeated generals dared not continue in their present position. At the approach of the Allies the retreat was resumed, encumbered as it was by seven thousand invalids. Near the sources of the Danube the Elector and Marsin were at length cheered by meeting with Villeroi, who, having heard of their disaster, had advanced into Germany with his army, and with a seasonable supply of provisions. That marshal, observing the dejected looks of the soldiers, tried, after his fashion, to raise their spirits by a little gasconading. He should not, he said, remain long inactive. It was his purpose in a few days to march into Wurtemburg; and then the conquerors would have to look to their laurels.* A week, however, had not elapsed before the direction which the allied forces were taking convinced him of the necessity of hastening to the succour of Landau. Passing the Rhine at Strasburg, he hurried up the left bank, took post on the river Queich, and set about fortifying his position with an earnestness that made all Europe believe he intended to dispute the passage of the Allies. Undaunted, however, by his preparations, the Allies pressed calmly on. On the 9th of September their advanced guard made its appearance; and at that terrible sight the resolution of Villeroi, if resolution he had ever formed, suddenly melted away. So precipitate was the retreat of the French that some pieces of cannon and several ammunition carts were abandoned as being likely to impede their motions. The siege of Landau was immediately afterwards commenced. The town was invested by Prince Louis with a part of the army, while Marlborough and Eugene, with the remainder of the troops, covered the operations.†

In the elation of spirits inspired by their splendid success

* Lettres Historiques; see the correspondence of this period in Coxe's Memoirs.

† The Marlborough Despatches; Lettres Historiques.

and by the extraordinary timidity just shown by the army of Villeroi, the allied commanders scarcely imagined that this fortress would detain them long. Yet Landau was, in truth, not the least formidable link in that iron chain which the prudence of Louis and the skill of Vauban had drawn round the northern and eastern frontiers of France. It was surrounded by a broad moat, filled with the waters of the Queich, while its frowning series of curtains, redoubts, bastions, and lunettes seemed to bid defiance to every assailant. In pursuance of the instructions of Louis some improvements had recently been made in the defences: the governor was a man of courage and experience; and the garrison was ample. From the circumstance, moreover, that the town had been during the two previous years twice besieged and twice taken, the approaches to the outworks were so extensively undermined as to necessitate the most extreme caution on the part of the attacking regiments to escape being blown into the air.

On the other hand, the siege apparatus of the Allies was deficient, and time was lost in procuring a supply from Mannheim. A stretch of bad weather followed, and hindered the digging of the trenches. When Prince Louis at length opened his fire, the cannon made little impression upon the excellent fortifications. Forage was difficult to obtain, and sickness now began to spread among the troops, who had been severely tried by their long and laborious campaign.* On the 21st of September Joseph, son of the Emperor, and King of the Romans, reached the camp. He was a brave and active young prince, grateful to enthusiasm for the services which had been rendered to his house, and he did his utmost to stimulate the efforts of the besiegers; but the work went but slowly forward. The length of time which it was likely to consume caused much uneasiness to the commanders, who had yet the task before them of securing their winter quarters on the Moselle. It was settled, therefore, that attempts should be immediately made to capture the towns of Treves and Traarbach, which would insure to the Allies possession of the course of the Moselle to its junction with the Rhine at Coblence. This duty Marlborough proposed to undertake with a strong detachment. A separation

* The journal of the siege in the Lettres Historiques.

from Eugene was indeed attended with risk, for Villeroi's force fully equalled that of both commanders together. But the manifest anxiety shown by the Marshal to avoid coming to blows was calculated to make his opponents venturesome. He had withdrawn into the province of Alsace, and was there throwing up entrenchments with a diligence that excited no small amount of derision in the allied camp. A story circulated among the ranks that the English commander had good-naturedly permitted a French officer, one of his prisoners, to return on his parole to Villeroi for the purpose of informing him that he was giving himself very unnecessary trouble. It was not in Alsace that the Allies were to be looked for, but upon the Moselle.*

The march to Treves, though uninterrupted by the presence of any enemy, had, however, its difficulties. "It was through the terriblest country that can be imagined," wrote Marlborough, "for the passage of an army with cannon. Had it rained, we must have thrown the cannon into some river, for to carry it back would have been impossible."† Yet such was the stupor into which the French marshals had fallen, that no attempt was made to save the very important towns which were threatened. Treves surrendered at the approach of the Allies. Traerbach, which was better fortified and garrisoned, sustained a month's siege by the Prince of Hesse before capitulating.

Soon afterwards, and while the fate of Landau was still undecided, Marlborough quitted the camp. He had even yet work, and work of a kind which does not usually fall to the province of a general, to perform before he could permit himself to return to his country, to present himself before a well-pleased sovereign, and to retire for a few short weeks of partial leisure to the home of his heart. The fortune of war had not been everywhere so favourable to the Allies as in Germany. At the very time Marlborough was laying waste the dominions of the Elector of Bavaria, Vendôme was seizing upon town after town belonging to the Duke of Savoy. The oppressed sovereign appealed to his new allies for aid, and to the camp of Marl-

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

† Marlborough to Godolphin, October 26, November 7; to the Duchess same date.

borough came in due course his requests. For the tent of Marlborough, whether it were pitched in the Netherlands or in Bavaria, on the Danube or on the Moselle, was still regarded as the temple of the oracle. Godolphin, rendered timid and sensitive by the sneers and threats of disappointed Tories and ambitious Whigs, was as a paralyzed man until he had poured his perplexities into the ears of his friend, and been illumined by his wisdom and counsel. Never since Wolsey governed England while Henry was tilting, revelling, and endeavouring to solve theological problems, was so much and such varied business accumulated in the hands of a minister. While directing every motion of the allied army, while compelled to watch every movement of the French marshals, he had to snatch moments for reflection upon the state of affairs in Portugal, in Savoy, in Hungary, to maintain a correspondence with every statesman and crowned head in Europe, to concert with Heinsius how to manage parties in the States-general, to instruct Godolphin how to avoid the traps and pitfalls of discontented politicians at home, to entreat his wife not to quarrel with the Queen, and to restrain her Majesty from making foolish exhibitions of her partiality to Tories and her abhorrence of Whigs. It might well be imagined that a position requiring such vigour, both of body and mind, could not have been supported without nerves of iron; but Marlborough's constitution was by no means faultless. He was a prey to a good many of the lighter ills that afflict human nature, violent headaches, accessions of fever, fits of ague. For days together he was not unfrequently laid up in his bed, incapable of transacting any business. Throughout the campaign of Blenheim his letters to his wife abound with complaints of suffering and illness; and it is touching to notice how in those periods of despondency, the heart of the man whom all Europe was caressing and applauding, flew back to his family and his home. No youth of eighteen, intoxicated with the bliss of first love, ever wrote in more devoted strains to the object of his idolatry than Marlborough, at the age of fifty-six, wrote to his wife of thirty years' standing. In the eyes of all other people that beloved Sarah was nothing more than an arrogant and bad-tempered old woman; but in the eyes of the uxorious

husband she was still a goddess. A few cross words from her would throw him into an agony of despair: a kind letter would make him mad with joy.

The Duke of Savoy urgently required the loan of eight thousand men to enable him to make some resistance to Vendôme. It was not easy to find any European potentate in a condition to lend this number of soldiers. The resources of England, Holland, and the Empire were already strained nearly to their limit. The only chance of obtaining them lay in the King of Prussia, and that monarch was not very willing to lend his troops at this conjuncture, on account of his apprehensions as to what turn the restless ambition of Charles XII. of Sweden might take when he had concluded his war with the King of Poland. Marlborough was, however, reluctant to leave the chance of obtaining the men in the hands of ordinary diplomatists. He determined to go to Berlin, and make the request in person. The winter had now set in: the roads were in frightful condition: he was in no state of health to bear rough travelling; and his longing for home was almost uncontrollable. But buoyed up by a sense of duty, he entered his carriage, and at the end of seven tedious days reached the capital of the newly-made King. His assiduity was rewarded with success. Frederick was flattered by this homage to his power and importance. He granted the men, though his concession was clogged by a stipulation which might have involved the maritime powers in very serious consequences. He required that during the absence of his troops, the safety of his dominions should be guaranteed by England and Holland; and Marlborough's anxiety to obtain the eight thousand men was so great that he consented to take them even upon these perilous terms.*

Before the close of November every object which he had proposed to himself in undertaking this grand campaign had been accomplished. The Electress had at length yielded to the instances and threats of Wratislaw, and had concluded a treaty under which the whole of Bavaria, with a trifling reservation in her own favour, became subject to Imperial authority. The

* Marlborough to Harley, November 25, December 6; to the Duchess, November 27, December 8.

Elector, so lately the most powerful prince of Germany, had sunk to the condition of a soldier of fortune dependent upon the favour of Louis. Landau, Treves, and Traerbach were all in the hands of the Allies. Everything seemed to promise success to the invasion of France, which was to be attempted as soon as the campaigning season returned. The French monarch was humbled: his troops were dispirited: the soldiers of the allied powers were radiant with exultation and hope.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE victory of Blenheim is not the only event which makes the year 1704 a most memorable one in English annals. Nine days before Marlborough routed the French upon the Danube, the soldiers and sailors of Rooke's fleet wrested from the Spaniards the fortress of Gibraltar. The news of this capture excited at the time but little attention. It passed indeed almost unnoticed in the ebullition of vanity which followed the dazzling victory. Yet Gibraltar is the only trophy secured by British prowess in this war, which still, after the lapse of more than a century and a half, remains in British hands. The other advantages obtained by the gallantry and skill of our ancestors have been swallowed up by time. Immortal glory and a debt of fifty millions sterling are all that survive to us from the fields of Blenheim, Ramilies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet. But the possession of Gibraltar still enables us to curb the excessive power of Spain, to employ our superabundant regiments, and to spend our superfluous revenue.

The allied fleet, bearing the titular King of Spain, had, upon its second trial of the sea, a prosperous voyage to the Tagus. Charles landed at Lisbon, and was received by the King of Portugal with ostentatious magnificence. The festivities lasted during three days, not a little to the disgust of those English and Dutch officers who were intent upon serious business. The money, it was remarked, which his Majesty squandered on balls and banquets, on fireworks and illuminations, he might have laid out to better purpose on his dismantled fortresses, his ill-stored magazines, and his ragged and half-armed troops. An allied force, consisting of eight thousand English and four thousand Dutch soldiers, was soon afterwards disembarked. The commander-in-chief was the

Duke of Schomberg, second son of the great Protestant marshal who fell at the battle of the Boyne.*

Rooke, after setting on shore the King of Spain and the troops, employed two months in cruising off the coast of France for the purpose of protecting the passage of a fleet of merchantmen which was expected from the Levant. A few galleons, which fell in his way, beguiled the tediousness of his duty, and kept up the spirits of his crews. The traders at length appeared, and were safely escorted to England. In traversing the Mediterranean, however, they had been exposed to a danger so imminent that their escape, according to Burnet, could be attributed to nothing short of the special interference of Providence. Some French ships of war were lying in wait for them in the Bay of Tunis. Under cover of a dense fog they passed this ambush, and never even heard of the peril they had incurred until they were in safety.†

This service performed, Rooke returned to Lisbon. He was now at liberty to carry out the remaining part of his instructions. He was directed to make his way up the gulf of Lyons to the assistance of Nice and Villafranca, two towns belonging to the Duke of Savoy, which, according to report, Vendôme designed to besiege. On the 8th of May, accordingly, the allied fleet, consisting of forty ships of the line, again departed from Lisbon. On board was now the Prince of Darmstadt, still as confident as before that the population of Spain was heart and soul for an Austrian sovereign, and that, if supported by only a handful of troops, he should be able to excite a revolution that would drive Philip from the throne. He prevailed upon Rooke to make, in passing, an experiment upon Barcelona. Off that city the fleet made its appearance at the end of May, and no sooner was it in sight than a boat put off from the shore, and two or three adherents of the Austrian party came on board. These gentlemen assured the Prince and the admiral that the garrison of the city was insignificant, that among the inhabitants the supporters of Charles were as five to one, that the Allies had but to make the show of an attack, and that one of the gates would be opened to them. Rooke, accordingly, set on shore the Prince,

* Lettres Historiques. † Lettres Historiques; Burnet; Boyer.

with all the marines of the fleet, at a distance of about a mile from Barcelona. The Viceroy of Catalonia was forthwith summoned to surrender the keys of the city; and as his answer was a refusal, some Dutch bomb-ketches of light burthen crept up to within a short distance of the walls, and opened fire. But the Viceroy was undaunted, the civic authorities stood by him, and did their best to trace out the band of conspirators which evidently existed in their midst. One man was arrested, and in his fright made a full discovery of his fellow conspirators, who were immediately taken into custody. As soon as intelligence of this proceeding reached Darmstadt his hopes of taking Barcelona vanished. He grew alarmed for the safety of his marines. Fearing that the garrison had already learned how small the attacking force was, and that a sortie would be made, he hastily re-embarked his men. The bomb-ketches, which had not done much execution, were signalled to cease firing; and in a few hours the whole fleet had disappeared from before the threatened city, leaving those persons who, in reliance upon British faith and energy, had brought themselves under suspicion of being traitors, to get out of the difficulty in the best manner they could.*

Rooke now pursued his course to the Gulf of Lyons; but when off the island of Hières, he was overtaken by a frigate which had been despatched in quest of him by the English resident at Lisbon, and some important intelligence was communicated. Nice and Villafranca, he was informed, no longer stood in danger of being besieged. On the other hand, the Count de Toulouse was on his way with the Brest fleet to join the fleet of Toulon. Rooke called a council of his flag-officers. It was resolved to alter their course, and look out for the Count. Four days afterwards, towards evening, the hostile fleet was descried, and the night was spent in preparing for action. When the morning came forty sail could be counted on the horizon, and Rooke signalled to his captains to close with the enemy. The wind, however, gradually dropped off, and a calm succeeded which lasted until sundown. During the night and the ensuing day the French ships, which had the advantage in sailing powers, contrived to increase their

* Lettres Historiques; Burnet; Boyer.

distance. By the evening of the second day hardly a sail was visible; and Rooke, who had now kept up the chase to within a prudent distance of Toulon, judged it best to desist from further pursuit.*

Returning through the Straits, Rooke was in Lagos bay joined by Sir Cloudesley Shovel with about twenty ships. A council of war was held to deliberate upon what should be done with the united fleets. The instructions furnished to both admirals left them at liberty to undertake anything on the coast of Spain which might, in their discretion, advance the cause of the allied powers. It was determined to make an attempt upon Gibraltar. That remarkable promontory, although in itself a fortress, was then very far from being the Gibraltar which the present generation seems justified by experience in deeming impregnable to the combined fleets and armies of Europe. Military science had done little as yet to complete the work of nature. Charles V. had indeed protected the town by walls and a few batteries, and the harbour by two moles stretching out into the bay; but his indolent successors had added nothing to these fortifications. The rock, that present marvel of engineering skill, and which now precludes all approach to the shore by an enemy, was as yet but scantily strengthened by artificial means. Nevertheless so exquisitely adapted is the position for defence, that it seems that, had but two or three hundred really efficient soldiers stood behind the batteries, the whole power of the British and Dutch fleets might have been set at defiance. The defence had been, however, abandoned, with the usual carelessness of Spanish authorities, to a garrison of only eighty soldiers, nominally increased by a disorderly, licentious, superstitious rabble raised for the emergency from the population of the town and neighbourhood.†

On the 1st of August, the allied fleet sailed into the bay; and in the afternoon Darmstadt effected a landing with eighteen

* Boyer; Life of Rooke in the Biographia Britannica. The Count of Toulouse was one of the illegitimate children of Louis XIV.

† Mariana (Historia de España) says, "Gobernaba la plaza D. Diego Salinas que no tenia sino ochenta hombres de guarnicion y treinta caballos para guardar la costa, pero no tenia ni artilleros ni municiones para defenderse. Tan descuidada y abandonada estaba la plaza mas importante que tenia España." St. Simon calls the garrison "Une quarantaine de gueux." Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Burnet.

hundred marines upon the isthmus which connects the rock and town with the mainland. The governor was forthwith summoned to surrender: he returned a refusal; and on the morning of the 3rd, the ships, which had been told off for the duty, commenced proceedings. So vigorous was their fire that before noon half the defenders of the moles and batteries had fled into the town. A landing on one of the moles was then attempted. The first boat's crew which entered the fortification was blown into the air by the springing of a mine; but a footing on the ruins was gained by the sailors who followed. The tars, full of spirit, then advanced and took possession of a small redoubt standing nearer the town, from which the garrison had deemed it prudent to scamper. A second summons to surrender was now despatched to the governor. He returned no answer that night, but on the following morning signified his willingness to capitulate. It was thought that a circumstance had contributed in no slight degree to shake his first resolution. In a church at Europa Point a number of women had collected to supplicate an image of the Virgin to extend that protection to their country which it was little likely to derive from their husbands, sons and brothers. These poor creatures, upon suspending their devotions, were horror-struck to find their return to the town cut off by the invaders. Some of them fell into the hands of the sailors; and the shrieks which, either with or without good cause, they raised, reached the ears of their relatives. The rumour spread that the cruel heretics would put all the women to death unless the town were given up; and some pressure was in consequence brought by the townspeople to bear upon the governor. But in truth the town, after the landing had been accomplished, was scarcely capable of further defence; and the governor no doubt acted wisely and humanely in saving the inhabitants by a surrender from the horrors inseparable from a capture by storm. The allied commanders, who had no wish to press the war against Spaniards, at once accorded easy and honourable terms to the garrison; and in the evening Darmstadt marched in with his marines, and took formal possession of the town.*

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer. The incident about the women is taken from San Felipe, Commentarios, and from Burnet. Notice the sneer at Rooke in the last author.

The fleet, which was in want of water, now stood over to the coast of Africa. There was yet every chance that it would have to maintain its conquest by fighting a great battle; for it was known that Toulouse was not far off, and it was reasonable to infer that the capture of so important a stronghold as Gibraltar would stimulate him to active exertions for its recovery. As, a fortnight afterwards, the ships were returning to the Spanish coast, the French fleet was descried far away to the east. Rooke at once summoned the flag-officers to attend him in his cabin. The general opinion was that the French were bent on fighting; and it was therefore decided to await their attack off Gibraltar. A thousand of the marines were immediately re-embarked, and every preparation was made for action. But in a few hours it became evident that nothing was further from the Count's intentions than to seek a battle. The hostile ships gradually disappeared from the horizon. For many reasons their retreat should have been highly gratifying to the allied commanders. The latter were by no means in good condition for fighting. Their ships had been so long at sea that they had become heavy sailers: scurvy had made such havoc among the crews that they were short of hands; and worst of all, so much powder and shot had been expended upon Gibraltar that the supply of ammunition was failing. But the gallant seamen dreaded the tongues of their own countrymen far above the prowess of the French. They had caught sight of the enemy, and they knew well that no excuses would avail them for not doing their best to beat him. With true British spirit it was decided to give chase to the Count. On the morning of the 24th of August the hostile fleet was again discerned lying off the Cape of Malaga, and drawn up in regular order. The array consisted of fifty-two line-of-battle ships,—just one less in number than the fleet commanded by Rooke. The latter hoisted the signal to engage, and Shovel, who led the van, bore down upon the enemy with a courage closely bordering, in the eyes of a landsman, upon rashness. His companions were far behind, and nothing, it would seem, but a favourable wind which sprung up at the right moment, and assisted them to advance, prevented the enclosure and destruction of the foremost ships. The action by degrees became general, and lasted during the

whole day. Rooke's own vessel was throughout in the hottest of the fire, and had occasionally to contend against terrible odds; for the ships which supported the Admiral were compelled, for want of ammunition, to drop one by one out of the line. But the night fell before a single flag had been struck on either side; and the French took advantage of the darkness to get their ships, which had been badly damaged, towed off by a number of galleys which attended them. Rooke, on his side, was certainly in no condition to renew the engagement. All his ships, which had taken part in the action, were shattered to a frightful extent, and the ammunition was by this time almost entirely expended. But with a hardihood one is in doubt whether to admire or condemn, he continued for two days longer to hobble after his enemy. All the incidents of this naval campaign set in a strong light the confidence of the English and Dutch sailors, and the feeling of despondency which had settled upon the French commanders and crews. The former were always eager to engage under any circumstances of disadvantage. The chief care of the French was to keep out of the way of their adversaries.*

It was not until every hostile ship had been lost to view that Rooke thought himself justified in relinquishing the pursuit and returning to England. For the defence of Gibraltar he left the marines as a garrison with as many guns as he could spare. Eighteen ships of war remained behind in the Tagus under Sir John Leake and Admiral Vanderdussen for the further security of the captured town.

It was indeed scarcely to be expected that the government of Spain, careless and indolent as it usually was, would suffer so important a place to be wrested from the crown without making an effort to expel the invaders. The news of the capture of Gibraltar excited, in fact, a sensation at Madrid almost comparable to the sensation excited at Paris by the news of the defeat of Tallard's army. The Spanish troops were then collected on the Portuguese frontier, and were, under the direction of the Duke of Berwick, pushing on their operations with

* Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Burnet; Mariana. Lamberty gives the letter of the Dutch admiral to the States-general. St. Simon has quite a different account of the action. The French claimed the victory, and Louis ordered a Te Deum.

remarkable success. It was at once, however, determined that the work of regaining Gibraltar should supersede all other business; and twelve thousand men were detached and sent into Andalusia under the command of the energetic and skilful Villadarias. Toulouse, on his side, detached ten ships from his fleet, and instructed his lieutenant, the Baron de Pointis, to form a blockade of the town by sea. The Baron was, however, a wiser man than his superior in naval rank. He knew that with a powerful fleet watching his motions from the Tagus, and prepared at any moment to spring upon him, it would be folly to venture far from cover. All he dared perform was to land three thousand French soldiers at Malaga as a reinforcement for Villadarias, and then hasten to secure himself in the harbour of Cadiz. On the 22nd of October the Marquis reached the isthmus, and the first siege of that series of sieges which the English have sustained in Gibraltar began almost immediately.*

It was soon evident that the crumbling fortifications of Charles V., which defended the rock and town on the land side were too weak to stand even against such inferior artillery as Villadarias could bring to bear upon them; and the Marquis kept up his fire with an energy that soon laid every exposed bastion in ruins. But Darmstadt discovered upon this occasion all the qualities of a good commander—courage, zeal, unflagging vigilance, and a high degree of ingenuity. Throughout the siege he was to be found at all hours in the place where danger was most to be apprehended, cheering his exhausted soldiers and directing the labours of gunners, engineers, carpenters, and pioneers. Nor were the men unworthy of their gallant commander. The little band, as united as brothers, exhibited, in truth, a strange contrast to the motley assemblage which was besieging the town. The admixture of a few well-equipped French regiments with the ragged, disorderly Spanish troops made the army of Villadarias resemble the image of iron and clay that appeared to Nebuchadnezzar in his dreams. As soon as breaches were made in the walls new works rose as if by magic behind the ruins. The Marquis, from a reasonable dread of mines, was extremely circumspect in his attacks. Once

* Lettres Historiques.

only, and in the fourth month of the siege, was a lodgment effected by the assailants; but they held their position only until a sufficient number of the garrison had been roused from slumber. The English and Dutch marines had indeed much hard work in constantly repairing the walls, in constructing mines, and keeping a perpetual watch over the motions of the besieging army; yet Gibraltar was at no time during this siege in much danger of being captured. The command of the sea was throughout in the hands of the Allies. De Pointis thought himself unsafe outside the harbour of Cadiz. Within a fortnight after the opening of the trenches Sir John Leake appeared in the bay; and from that time continued to ply between Lisbon and Gibraltar, conveying at each return to the beleaguered town reinforcements of men, provisions, and ammunition.*

The siege, hopeless as it was from the commencement, was nevertheless protracted through six months, and was not finally abandoned before the Allies had achieved another triumph over the reduced navy of France. In the month of February, 1705, Villadarias was most imprudently superseded in the command of the besieging army. He was no favourite, it seems, with the French clique which had obtained the entire control over Spanish affairs; and Philip, ignorant of the strength of Gibraltar, and brought up in the notion that none but a French general could understand anything of the art of war, was easily induced to entrust the future superintendence of the siege to the Marshal de Tessé. That personage was accordingly sent to the camp with the powers of generalissimo; and Villadarias at once yielded up the command, and took his departure in disgust. The folly and injustice of the clique in putting this insult upon the able Spaniard appears still more flagrant when the character of the man selected to supersede him is taken into consideration. Tessé, without having distinguished himself in a single military action, had owed his elevation solely to his lively and agreeable manners, and his subservience to men and women in power. As a diplomatist he had displayed some ingenuity in watching and unravelling intrigues at the court of Turin; but as a general he was, if possible, more ignorant, more presumptuous,

* Lettres Historiques; Burnet; Boyer.

and more careless than Villeroi.* With such a commander to direct their efforts the besiegers of course made no progress whatever. What was obvious, however, to the whole world, did not escape the notice of Tessé. He perceived that a siege of Gibraltar would never be successful unless the town could be closed from receiving relief by sea. He therefore laid his injunctions upon Pointis to continue in the station which he occasionally occupied in the bay, when he knew that the allied fleets were at a safe distance. Pointis, the ablest and most distinguished officer then in the French naval service, represented in vain to the Marshal that, if he remained longer where he was, he would infallibly be caught by the fleet, which, according to his advices, was already on its return from the Tagus. Tessé persisted, and Pointis remained in the bay with only five ships, until one morning he perceived to his horror the squadron of Sir John Leake doubling Cape Carnero. The French ships cut their cables, crowded all sail, and endeavoured to slip away towards Malaga. They were, however, dull sailers, and were soon overtaken. Three of the ships fell into the hands of the Allies. The other two, one of which was commanded by Pointis, were steered upon the rocks and fired by the crews, who escaped with nothing more than their lives to land.†

Had the operations of the fleet and the brave defence of Gibraltar constituted all that passed in the Peninsula, the English and Dutch nations would have had little cause to complain. But, unfortunately, the operations of the allied troops sent to Portugal had been far from gratifying. People at home, hearing that so many fine regiments had been landed at Lisbon, naturally expected that each post would bring news that the English and Dutch, supported by the Portuguese, had marched into Spain, and were driving before them the raw levies of Philip. When intelligence did at length arrive, it was that the troops of Philip had invaded Portugal, had captured numerous towns and fortresses, and were then in a position threatening Lisbon itself.

The origin of these disasters to the allied arms was simply that

* See the character of Marshal de Tessé in St. Simon.
† Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

the King of Portugal, notwithstanding the enthusiasm with which he had welcomed the English and Dutch troops to his shores, had made no preparations whatever to enable them to take the field. As soon as the expensive rejoicings were over the allied officers instituted a professional examination, and the nakedness of the land began to appear. No stores of any kind had been provided. The King was unable to fulfil an engagement into which he had some time previously entered to provide horses for the cavalry regiments; and the scarcity of these animals was popularly attributed to the circumstance that the French minister had, before quitting the country, taken the precaution to buy up every horse which was to be sold, and which was worth anything. Schomberg, it was soon apparent, was destitute of the talent required to improve this miserable position of affairs. His vanity was easily ruffled, and before long he was absorbed in the contemplation of his personal grievances. He had expected that, after the example set by the Dutch in appointing Marlborough to the command of their troops, his Majesty of Portugal would have likewise preferred him to be general-in-chief of his armies. So much, he conceived, was due to one of his race and name; and certainly no name should have excited more veneration in Portugal than the one he bore. To the spirited leadership of his illustrious father, the Portuguese nation owed its independence, and the King his throne. His Majesty, however, instead of marking his affection for the name of Schomberg, or distinguishing in some particular manner the commander of the British from the commander of the Dutch troops, bestowed equally upon him and Fagel the title of marshal-de-camp. This fancied insult was more than the Duke's pride could endure. Unanimity between him and the Dutch general was thenceforward at an end.

In this position were affairs in Portugal at the opening of the campaigning season. Meanwhile preparations for war were being pushed on at Madrid in a manner which plainly revealed the determined will of Louis in the background. Early in the year twelve thousand French troops crossed the Pyrenees to reinforce the Spanish army, which was estimated at nearly forty thousand men. The commander was a personage in

whom no English reader can fail to take a deep interest—the son of an English monarch, the nephew of the greatest of English generals, and yet a naturalised subject and an officer in the service of the King of France. The prospects of the Duke of Berwick had been blighted by the fall of his father, James II. He felt that the country of his birth was no longer his home: he had cast off the nation which had rejected his parent, and was now earning an independent livelihood by leading the soldiers of the country which had adopted him against the armies of his fatherland. His duties as a French general he discharged with the utmost fidelity, and doubtless without being tormented by conscientious scruples; for to the King of France he owed everything, and to the actual sovereign of England practically nothing. Without possessing first-rate genius as a strategist, his abilities were nevertheless considerable, and had been improved to the utmost; for his whole soul was in his profession. His temperament, naturally cold, had been rendered hard and stern by misfortune. The camp was his home: he was ill at ease when out of its precincts: he detested the frivolities of courts: he took no pleasure in sensual enjoyments. His character might be almost compared with that of Tilly, the renowned general of the thirty years' war, who at the close of a long life of perpetual campaigning, could boast that he had never touched women or tasted wine. The Duke similarly admitted that in his whole existence he never made a friend or an enemy except for the advantage of the service. In point of military endowments, the prudent and calculating Berwick differed from Villars, the perfect type of a dashing Frenchman, much as Turenne differed from Condé. He especially valued himself upon his circumspection. He considered that his talents lay more in defending than in attacking; and it was an often expressed wish of his that he could find some strong place to hold out against an army. Such was the commander, then in his thirty-fourth year, whom Louis sent to his grandson, and whom Philip at once invested with the title of Captain-General of his forces.*

Berwick's first measure upon reaching Madrid was to join

* Mémoires de Berwick; St. Simon.

his voice to that of the French party about Philip, who were imploring his Majesty to take the field in person. The object of these solicitations was much less to encourage the troops by the presence of royalty than to separate the weak young prince for a time from his wife. Ever since the King and Queen had entered Spain, the latter had been under the influence of her first lady of the bedchamber, the Princesse des Ursins, one of those sprightly creatures who retain unimpaired their powers of fascination at the age of sixty-five. The lady had been indebted for her situation to Louis himself, who was anxious to surround the young couple with servants and ministers whom he supposed to be devoted to the French interest, and for a time she had seemed content to enact the part she had been instructed to play. The Queen, then not more than sixteen years of age, became passionately attached to her; and the power of the favourite was unlimited, for Philip, listless and indolent, had no other object in life than that of pleasing his wife. Her ambition rose. She aspired to be something more than a mere agent of Louis: she wished to be prime minister in reality, without being constantly obliged to refer to the will of a foreign monarch. Her design was to teach the royal pair to throw off the yoke of their grandfather, to dismiss French ministers and counsellors, to surround themselves with the nobility of Spain, and, in a word, to re-establish those Pyrenees which Louis had four years since declared to be abolished as the boundary of French power. Had she succeeded, the Allies would have attained without bloodshed the very object for which they were contending. France and Spain would have soon become as much estranged from each other as if no ties of blood existed between their rulers. But the supervision of Louis was too keen to be long eluded. He became aware of the danger he was incurring from Madame des Ursins, and addressed himself to the task of detaching her from his grandchildren. It was necessary to employ stratagem in accomplishing this object; for the young Queen doted upon her servant, and while Philip was within reach of her remonstrances, it would have been idle to urge upon him the requirements of his grandfather. By much coaxing he was at length prevailed upon to assume the command of his troops on

the frontier of Portugal. No sooner had he reached Placencia than the French ambassador put into his hands a letter from Louis, enjoining him to dismiss the Princess, and to choose from a list of four ladies a successor to her post. Away from the influence of his wife, Philip at once relapsed into that state of awe which his stern and stately relation had inspired in him from his cradle. He consented to do all that was required of him. He despatched an order to Madame des Ursins to leave Madrid; and the lady, although with very sanguine expectations of a speedy recall, judged it prudent to obey.*

The French Ministers of Philip had laboured energetically to have things in readiness for the Franco-Spanish army to take the field betimes. But the habitual indolence of the native subordinates had proved invincible. It was not until the commencement of May that Berwick found himself in a position to commence operations. Meanwhile some grave errors had been committed by the Allied officers. The King of Portugal, appreciating the insecurity of his frontiers, while guarded only by his own wretched troops, pressed the English and Dutch commanders to take his towns under their protection. They complied. The system of defence they adopted was perhaps attributable to the ill-feeling existing between them. Schomberg spread his forces about that portion of the province of Alentejo called the Sierra de Ossa. Fagel, with the Dutch battalions, stationed himself upon the other side of the Tagus, in the Sierra de Estrella.

This absurd distribution of the Allied forces, which had not even a bridge for intercommunication, suggested to Berwick his plans for an invasion of Portugal. Philip and himself, he determined, would penetrate into the country on the right bank of the Tagus, making themselves masters of all the fortified places by the way. The Prince de Serclaes, with the remainder of the troops, would march on the southern side; and the two divisions would reunite at Villa Velha for an attack upon Abrantes, which, if successful, would probably ensure the fall of Lisbon.†

Salvaterra, the first place invested by Philip, was of sufficient

* Mémoires de Berwick; Lettres Historiques.
† Mémoires de Berwick.

strength to have detained his army for a fortnight, but was, to the surprise of Berwick, surrendered at the close of the second day; the governor, a courtly simpleton, sending to excuse himself for firing his guns at all on account of his ignorance at first that his sacred Majesty of Spain was in person before the walls. As the army advanced into the interior, Berwick was astonished at the stout resistance with which he was met by the simple peasantry, as contrasted by the cowardly surrenders everywhere made by the garrisons of fortified towns. The enigma was not, however, to most people, a difficult one to solve. The Portuguese peasants were excited to fury by the sight of their old rival, the Spaniard. It was notorious that many of the officers of the Portuguese army had been corrupted by France. Fagel, despairing of his ability to hold out Castel Branco, withdrew his four Dutch regiments upon the approach of Philip, and posted them partly among the hills round Sarzelas, and partly near Villa Velha, in positions where, he flattered himself, they were tolerably safe. The invaders, meanwhile, were continually advancing. Castel Branco was taken in four days without more loss than that arising from a quarrel between the French and Spanish soldiers about the booty; and no sooner was it secured, than Berwick formed a plan for surprising the two Dutch battalions which were quartered near Sarzelas. At break of day, Fagel, who deemed himself in perfect security, was dismayed by the apparition of four thousand men in full march against him. He endeavoured to effect his retreat over the hills; but the light and active Spanish horse scrambled after the fugitives, flanked them on both sides, got in front and surrounded them, before the Dutchmen, exhausted with the unwonted labour of climbing hills, had compassed half a mile. Fagel contrived to escape almost alone. He drew his remaining regiments out of Villa Velha in all haste, and did not think himself again in safety until he had reached Punhete, with the fortified city of Abrantes between himself and the enemy.*

Berwick now turned to Villa Velha, threw a bridge over the Tagus, and waited anxiously for the arrival of Serclaes. Had that general possessed average abilities, there is good reason to

* Berwick; Lettres Historiques; Lamberty; Boyer.

think that the plans of the invaders, notwithstanding their deficiency in guns, stores, and above all, in barley, without which the Spanish horses could not live, would have succeeded beyond their hopes. But, happily for Portugal, and for the credit of the Allied arms, the Prince was a commander stupid and spiritless beyond example.

He was, upon entering Portugal, beset by most absurd apprehensions of the English forces, which lay quartered in the Sierra de Ossa, forty miles to the south of him, and which were distributed among so many towns, that a considerable time would have been required to collect them. Had Schomberg drawn his whole force into the field, it would still have been numerically inferior to his own army, which comprised several excellent French regiments. Yet such was his timidity or his distrust of his men, that he was startled by every rumour. It was not without difficulty that he was dissuaded by the Chevalier d'Asfeld, a young officer in the French service whom Berwick had prudently appointed as his second in command, from retreating for shelter under the cannon of Badajoz. But neither the counsels of the Chevalier nor reiterated messages from Philip himself, could overcome his reluctance to advance; and Berwick, losing patience at length, decided to go in search of his unsatisfactory coadjutor. The two armies fell in with each other at Portalegre, a town rather strongly fortified, and which Berwick at first doubted whether, with such artillery as he possessed, he could take. Under the superintendence, however, of the spirited Asfeld, cannon was dragged up an almost impracticable hill commanding the place; a vigorous fire was opened; and in six hours the besieged lost heart, and surrendered. The garrison consisted of two Portuguese battalions, and of an English regiment, that of Stanhope.

Berwick had, however, by returning to the frontier, lost invaluable moments. A Portuguese army was by this time in the field to the north of the Tagus. It had been hastily raised by the Marquis das Minas, an energetic old man, who, having served nearly his whole life in foreign countries, was a stranger to the new-fashioned predilections for France entertained by the younger officers, and cherished the good old popular antipathy for the Spaniard. At the head of some ten thousand

men, he made a dash into Spain, and sacked the town of Guinaldo. Rapidly returning over the frontier, he invested Monsanto, one of the conquests of Philip, defeated in a pitched battle a detachment sent for the relief of the place by Berwick, and would have broken down the bridge of boats by which the latter kept up communication with his garrisons, but for an advance of the French in strength. He thereupon retired, united his little army to that of Fagel; and the two commanders, although not daring to accept an engagement, maintained a front so firm and a position so impregnable in the mountain passes near Abrantes, as to convince Berwick that he had seen the limit of his progress in Portugal. Much annoyed, he retraced his steps to the frontier, and sent a considerable detachment to lay siege to Castel de Vida. The garrison of this town was an ample one, and comprised an English regiment. The fortifications might have been thought strong enough to be defended for ever against such wretched artillery as was brought against them. Yet the cowardly, or more probably the dishonest, governor at once sent to negociate for a capitulation. The Spanish commander would admit no other proposition than that the whole garrison should surrender as prisoners of war; and to these terms the English colonel swore vehemently that he would never submit. He announced his determination of retiring into the castle, and of holding out there with his men. But Portuguese cunning succeeded in outwitting the gallant but not very circumspect islander. While he was declaiming about his honour, his powder was being quietly thrown down a well by the orders of the governor; and thus deprived of all means of defence, no resource remained to the English but to accept the ignominious fate imposed upon them by their Portuguese comrades.*

It was now July: the heats had become intolerable: the Spanish and French army was fearfully reduced by sickness, and two-thirds of the horses had perished from the want of proper food. Berwick found himself, therefore, compelled to lead his troops back into Spain for an interval of repose. As men could not be spared to garrison his conquests in Portugal,

* Berwick; Lord Mahon's History of the War.

the fortifications of most of the captured towns were razed. Philip returned to Madrid. Berwick quartered his men in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo. Das Minas took up his station at Almeida, and the rival armies thus continued to be within forty miles of each other.

Nothing had seemed more unaccountable to the French general than the part Schomberg had played during a campaign which at one time threatened to involve the entire ruin of the Allied cause in the Peninsula. "During the whole time we were in the Alentejo," remarks Berwick in his memoirs, "we saw nothing of him or his men. He was always either at Estremos or Elvas, with his arms folded, without attempting to disturb us, and without even so much as caring to watch our movements." The explanation appears to be that Schomberg was one of those weak men who, when beset by difficulties, can do nothing but sit down and complain. What was he to do in a country where the King was a drivelling invalid, where the Ministers were intent only upon pilfering the treasury, and where the army was made up of a set of savages without arms in their hands or even shoes to their feet? To his Government at home he sent acrimonious reports on the conduct of the Portuguese Ministers: some of his complaints came to the knowledge of the persons who were the subjects of them; and they, in their turn, were sharp enough to discern faults in him. Then he declared that his actions were persistently misrepresented, and requested to be recalled. His request was granted by Anne with a few kind expressions soothing to his vanity; and in June, Ruvigny, a French refugee who had fought gallantly under William at the Boyne, and who had been since dignified with the title of Lord Galway, was sent out to relieve Schomberg of the command of the British troops.

When, towards the end of September, the heats subsided, everything seemed to augur a campaign of brilliant success to the Allied army in Portugal. The Franco-Spanish troops had, by sickness and detachments into Andalusia, melted away to little more than ten thousand men. Galway and Das Minas could take the field with more than twice that number. Except Ciudad Rodrigo, itself a place of no great strength, not a fortified town nor a broad river intervened between the Portuguese

frontier and the Spanish capital. The security of Madrid depended entirely upon Berwick's army, and the alarm of the Court was great lest he might venture to give battle and be defeated. Orders from Philip, dictated by the Duke de Grammont, an ignorant and presuming Frenchman who had recently taken up his residence in Spain, enjoined the Captain-general not to hazard an engagement, but to retire as the Allies advanced. Berwick boldly and wisely determined not to obey injunctions which he considered at once shameful and ruinous to the cause. He took up a position on the little river Agueda, with the resolution of disputing the passage of the Allies. They soon appeared on the opposite bank, but did not venture to cross in the face of an enemy. Galway, who had never exercised independent command before, thought that an attack would be too hazardous; and after marching backwards and forwards along the bank for a week, closely observed all the time by Berwick, decided that nothing was to be done, and rather tamely led his troops back to Almeyda.*

Much sympathy was felt in England during this year for the fate of the most exposed and unfortunate of her Allies, the Duke of Savoy. That prince had immediate cause to repent the moment when, relying upon the assistance of Imperial armies and the riches of the maritime powers, he had ventured to set the tremendous strength of Louis at defiance. Money had been sent to him by England and Holland, but what he most needed were battalions to make head against the overwhelming forces of Vendôme and La Feuillade; and with these the Emperor, almost besieged in his own capital by the Hungarian insurgents, was in no condition to supply him. Louis had issued orders to his generals to make an entire conquest of the Duke's dominions; and accordingly Vendôme early in May advanced from the side of the Milanese with forty thousand men, while La Feuillade, penetrating from the side of France, endeavoured to make himself master of the villages and passes of the Savoyard Alps.† All the force which the Duke could muster to resist the invaders, including the rein-

* Berwick; Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

† Lettres Historiques; Campagne d'Italie. The Allies were not very liberal with their supplies. From England the Duke received £40,000 and from Holland £20,000.

forcement of cavalry brought to him by Staremberg at the beginning of the year, amounted to less than one-half of the single army of Vendôme. But Victor Amadeus possessed, beyond any sovereign who had sat upon the uneasy throne of Savoy (and the line had been extraordinarily fertile in skilful princes), the qualities to direct the energies of a nation in times of peril. To waver between the rival powers of France and Austria, and to espouse the side which promised the highest recompense, had been for centuries the policy of the House of Savoy. Many a time had the slender bark of state been in danger of sinking amid the storm excited by the contention of these mighty antagonists, yet it had been invariably saved by the steadiness and experience of the pilot. Years of personal attention to the affairs of his dominions had made Victor Amadeus so perfectly acquainted with all his resources that he might almost dispense with Ministers. There was not a soldier in his garrisons or in his army who did not feel that he was personally known to his sovereign, that all his actions would be reported directly to him, and that he had a discerning master, just in punishing but generous in rewarding. The Duke had formerly exhibited courage in the field, but this season of trial was now to develop qualities rarer and more important in a prince,—energy in facing difficulties which might be successfully encountered, and patience in enduring misfortunes which it was impossible to avert.*

As soon as Vendôme crossed the Po, the Duke retired with his little army to a camp at Crescentino, on the same river, just opposite to the fortified town of Verrua. So well chosen was this position, that the Marshal, notwithstanding his immense superiority of force, did not venture to assault it. The invaders were, however, at liberty to lay siege to whatever towns they pleased; and Vercelli and Ivrea fell successively into the hands of Vendôme, though after making a resistance which surprised the confident Frenchman. Meanwhile La Feuillade had been equally successful in the mountainous region of Savoy. He captured the fortresses of Susa, Aosta, and Bard; and the two French armies were thenceforth enabled to communicate with

* Nouvelle Biographie Générale. Some discoveries have recently been made with respect to the last miserable days of this prince.

each other. In October Vendôme formed the siege of Verrua. Upon the prolonged defence made by this small but well fortified town the eyes of all Europe were turned with an interest scarcely secondary to that taken in the sieges of Landau and Gibraltar. The Duke, from his camp across the Po, kept up unintermitted communications with the garrison, sending into the town supplies of ammunition, artillery, provisions whenever needed, drawing off every day the sick and wounded, and substituting fresh men in their places. He once nearly succeeded in surprising the French camp, and the Italian army was not beaten off before it had inflicted considerable damage upon the siege works of Vendôme. An effective ally had now taken the field against the invaders. A deadly fever raged among the marshes of the Po. What with the deaths arising from pestilence and from wounds received in battle, joined with the captures continually made by the Duke's soldiers, it was computed that the loss to the French, during the six months consumed in this petty siege, amounted to twenty thousand men.*

Throughout this trying time the Duke's main hope of deliverance rested unswervingly on England. To Hill, the English envoy at Turin, he made no secret either of his distresses or of the confidence with which he expected relief. "From no side," wrote that gentleman to Marlborough, "do we expect salvation but from your Grace; but from thence we do expect it." The appeal was not made in vain. It has been already related that Marlborough proceeded to Berlin, and prevailed upon the King of Prussia to dispatch to the Duke a reinforcement of eight thousand men.

From this long narrative of the progress of the English arms and the struggles of the Allies of England on the Continent, it is now expedient to revert to the domestic affairs of the country. The news of the victory of Blenheim had stirred up the nation to a pitch of enthusiasm which had scarcely a parallel. For a month after the arrival of Colonel Parke, the chambers of the palace were crowded with deputations from every corporation

* Lettres Historiques; Botta (Storia d'Italia) gives a terrible picture of the sufferings of the French troops. The French accounts, as usual, pass very lightly over such painful matters. Verrua did not capitulate until April 5, 1705.

in the kingdom. The name of the hero who had furnished such splendid fuel to the national vanity was in every mouth.* At all to estimate the feeling of exultation, it must be borne in mind that three centuries had elapsed since an English army had achieved any considerable victory over the forces of France. In the interval, there had been indeed many great naval triumphs; but the conviction that England was, and ought to be, supreme and invincible at sea, was so rooted in the English mind, that a defeat of Spaniards, French or Dutchmen on that element had come to be accepted almost as a matter of course. No doubt the feeling still remained that, under competent leaders, the huge Yorkshire and Cornish men would prove that they had not degenerated from their ancestors, who had vanquished four times their own number of Frenchmen on the fields of Crecy and Agincourt. But there had been little within the memory of living men to countenance this notion. During the reign of Charles II. the courage and spirit of the French soldiery, the genius of French generals, had been the theme of every tongue, while every English traveller on the Continent had felt humiliated by the low opinions expressed concerning the military qualities of his countrymen. Under William, English regiments had again arrayed themselves against their old antagonists, and had evinced all the qualities for which they were anciently renowned; but the result had been rather to confirm than to diminish the reputation for invincibility acquired by the French troops. And now at length an army in which the English formed at least a very important element, and over which an Englishman presided, had achieved the greatest victory which had been witnessed in Europe for a hundred years. In a single campaign Marlborough had saved the Empire, and driven the French like sheep out of Germany. There could not be a doubt that the next year would see him and his victorious troops at the gates of Paris. On the 7th of September Anne went in state to St. Paul's through crowds of her exulting subjects to return thanks to the Almighty for the extraordinary blessings which he had vouchsafed to the nation.

The return of Marlborough was expected with impatience.

* Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough.

At length, on the 14th of December (Old Style), several yachts belonging to her Majesty swept up the Thames, and cast anchor off Greenwich. On board were the choicest trophies of the victory, Marshal Tallard and twenty-seven other French prisoners of note, together with innumerable standards, banners, and pieces of artillery. The conqueror, with his usual modesty or prudence, was anxious to escape an uproarious welcome from the London mob. He therefore took boat, and landed a little above the bridge at the Old Swan pier. There he was in a short time joined by the Duchess, and the pair proceeded up the river to Whitehall stairs, and from thence in a chair to St. James's palace, where they were received by the Queen and the Prince. At this interview the destination of the French prisoners was finally settled. On the following day they were set on shore at Blackwall, and were sent in her Majesty's carriages to Nottingham and Lichfield, where they remained until nearly the close of the war. The restraints upon their liberty were by no means rigorous. Upon giving their parole not to attempt to escape, they were permitted to extend their rides within ten miles of the city to which they were assigned.*

Upon the day succeeding his return Marlborough received the formal thanks of both Houses of Parliament. On the 3rd of January the inhabitants of the metropolis were regaled with a spectacle such as had not been witnessed in England since the days of Elizabeth. The captured banners, which had been temporarily deposited in the Tower, were borne by picked companies of soldiers and pikemen through the city, along the Strand, Pall Mall, and through St. James's Park to Westminster Hall. The hero of the day did not figure in the procession; but three days afterwards he went into the city in state to dine with the Lord Mayor and aldermen in Goldsmiths' Hall. He rode in one of the royal carriages, and with him were Godolphin, Somerset, and his companion in arms, the Prince of Hesse, while in a long train of private equipages followed the foreign Ministers, many of the peers, and the high officers of the army. The reception of the Duke by the crowd was rapturous. The

* Boyer; Lettres Historiques. I do not believe with Boyer that the French prisoners being kept two nights on board the yacht was intended as an insult to them. Probably their quarters were not prepared.

entertainment was so magnificent as to furnish a theme of conversation for some time afterwards.*

But the public mind was not satisfied with merely complimenting and applauding its idol. It seems to have been the general opinion that some monument should be erected, which should be at once a memorial of the victory, and a tribute of the national gratitude to the great commander who had been chiefly instrumental in obtaining it. A handsome public square was talked of to be called after the Duke's name. It was to be built on the site of St. James's mews: in the centre was to rise a pyramid with appropriate inscriptions; and the belief that this project was favourably considered in influential quarters was strong enough to send up to a high figure the price of the old houses in the locality. There can be little doubt that Anne was at this period as well inclined as ever to increase the honours and possessions of the husband of her friend. But she remembered her failure about the pension, and prudently determined therefore to leave the subject of remuneration entirely to the House of Commons. Among that body Marlborough had many rancorous opponents. The jealousy with which the extreme Tories regarded the monopolist of the royal favour, and the general hatred which they bore towards military men, had already broken out once in this session. But the popularity of Marlborough was now so enormous that not a member dared utter a word in disparagement of him. The Whigs carried without difficulty an address to her Majesty requesting her to consider of some means to perpetuate the memory of the great services performed by the Duke; and Anne a few days afterwards returned as her answer that she wished to grant the interest of the Crown in the honour and manor of Woodstock and the hundred of Wootton to him and his heirs. An act was accordingly passed to authorize this alienation of Crown land. The condition upon which the property was to be held, was declared to be the yearly presentation to the sovereign upon the anniversary of the victory of a banner embroidered with three fleurs-de-lis. But Anne's generous spirit was unsatisfied without conferring upon Marlborough a gift of her own. As soon as the land was assured, she issued an order to the comptroller

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

of works to commence the erection of a building to be named the Castle of Blenheim. The architect employed was Sir John Vanburgh.*

The army was rewarded with a munificence, which must to the present age appear stupendous. At the instigation of the Commons, three months' additional pay was granted by the Queen to all the officers and soldiers who had borne a part in the action, and six months' pay to those who had been wounded.†

It is amusing to turn from the spectacle of a nation mad with delight, and chiefly thinking how best to honour and reward the hero who had administered to its vanity, to the calm and thoughtful hero himself. No amount of shouting could turn Marlborough's brain for a moment. In the midst of all this sunshine his eye never lost sight of a few black clouds just above the horizon. It may be safely said that the grumbling of a few fanatics about the expense and impolicy of the war gave him more uneasiness than the acclamations of the people of half the cities of Europe gave him pleasure. That well-meaning tormentor, his wife, was determined that he should not lose by his absence from the country, the advantage of hearing what his enemies said about him. Every annoying remark which reached her ears (and her ears might be said to be in every chamber of the palace, in every meeting of discontented politicians, and in each house of the legislature), she conscientiously reported to her lord. While he was on his march to Germany, he was informed that some extreme men of both factions were exulting over his wild enterprise, that they were certain it would end in disaster, that Sir Edward Seymour had declared that he should be hunted like a hare when he returned, that some one else had hopes of being able to bring his head to the block. The news of the great victory of course caused much disappointment to these men. Thenceforward their speeches were to disparage its importance. It might be indeed that a good many soldiers were killed and taken; but what was that to the French king? It was, in comparison with his resources, nothing more than to take a bucket of water from

* Parliamentary History; Coxe's Memoirs.
† Parliamentary History; Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Luttrell's Diary.

a river. "If," returned Marlborough to his wife, "we could but draw a few more such bucketfuls, we might then let the river run quietly without much apprehending its overflowing and destroying its neighbours." Yet these malignant remarks wounded him deeply. No one who should, in ignorance of the position of Marlborough, peruse the bitter complaints, the sentimental longings for peace and retirement which abound in his letters, would imagine that the writer had risen from poverty and obscurity to unexampled distinction and to immense wealth, and that he was at the time of penning these epistles the most successful and applauded man of his age. "I must endeavour," he says pathetically in a letter written but two months after his victory, "to leave a good name behind me in countries that have hardly any blessing but that of not knowing the detested names of Whig and Tory." *

The position of Godolphin, during the long absence of his powerful friend, had been one sorely trying to the patience. The unhappy suspicion that the Queen entertained a secret partiality for her exiled brother, and was anxious to alter that succession in the Protestant line which had been established in the previous reign, had by this time taken firm root in the minds of the English Whigs. The invincible repugnance shown by the Parliament of Scotland to pass an act in conformity with the English act of settlement had intensified that suspicion. The zealots for the Revolution steadily refused to believe that simple jealousy of England, a desire for independence or to drive a hard bargain for an union, could give rise to such vehement and persistent opposition as the Scotch manifested to the expressed wishes of the sovereign. If her Majesty and those who knew her mind, it was reasoned, really wished the thing to be done, it was incredible that the Scotch would presume to carry their disobedience to such lengths. But the true state of the case was, that those persons who were daring enough to exhibit this disloyalty were supported by the conviction, that the secret inclinations of her Majesty were at variance with the policy which she was constrained to adopt. To clear the Queen and himself from the insidious imputation of having Jacobite tendencies, was an object which Godolphin most sin-

* See the correspondence of this period in Coxe's Memoirs.

cerely desired to accomplish. But how to deal with a set of men so refractory, and so petulant as the Estates of Scotland, was a problem which might well drive a statesman to despair. One thing was indeed evident. It would be necessary to employ another Commissioner in the ensuing session. The influence of Queensberry had been tried, and had been found to fall very far short of what had been expected. Nor was it probable that Queensberry would be willing to confront the Parliament again. The eagerness with which he had availed himself of Frazer's falsehoods and forgeries to denounce his rivals, had much increased the list of his adversaries. It was determined therefore that the Marquis of Tweeddale, a man of moderate views, and on that account with few decided foes, should be allowed the opportunity of restoring harmony to the Estates. As much as possible was done to strengthen his influence. Queensberry and several of his friends were turned out of office to make room for the friends of Tweeddale, and several posts under Government were held in abeyance, significantly as bribes for those who might choose to earn them. It might seem, indeed, that Godolphin's policy was to conciliate every man, no matter what might be his principles, who had abilities, influence or ambition enough to make a disturbance. Those persons who had distinguished themselves by their opposition to the royal behests in the last session were now singled out for marks of favour. Athol was named Privy Seal, and was made a Duke. Tarbet was appointed a Secretary of State, and was raised to the dignity of Earl of Cromarty. Almost the only prominent man whom Godolphin could not see his way to propitiate was Hamilton.

Under these circumstances Tweeddale opened the session on the 6th of July, and read to the Parliament a letter from Anne. The Queen lamented the unsettled state of affairs which had prevailed in her kingdom of Scotland ever since her accession to the crown. She had hoped, she said, that differences and animosities were not so deeply rooted but that she might remove them; yet she had found to her regret that her endeavours to do so had only widened the breach. To such a height indeed had those animosities been carried, as to encourage her enemies beyond the sea to employ emissaries

to debauch her good subjects from their allegiance. She was willing, however, to trust that none of them but such as were obnoxious to the laws for their crimes, or were men of low and desperate fortunes, had given ear to the counsels of such persons. Whatever could be in reason demanded of her for rectifying abuses, and for quieting the minds of her subjects, she was disposed to concede, and to this effect she had empowered her Commissioner to give unquestionable proofs of her determination to maintain the government both in Church and State as by law established, and to consent to such laws as should be found wanting to the security of both. The main thing she had now to recommend, and she did recommend it with all the earnestness of which she was capable, was to settle the succession to the crown in the Protestant line. It was a measure absolutely necessary for the peace and happiness of Scotland, as well as for the security of the other parts of her dominions, for the reputation of her affairs abroad, and for the strengthening of the Protestant interest everywhere. If that measure were delayed Scotland would infallibly become the seat of war, and would be exposed to devastation and ruin. As to any reasonable terms which the Estates might see fit to impose upon the successor they appointed, she had already instructed her Commissioner to accede to them. There was but one other point which she had to urge upon the Parliament, and that was the necessity of providing funds for the defence of the kingdom.†

Never perhaps did sovereign express in more forcible or more pathetic terms the inclination to meet all the reasonable demands of subjects. To remove, if possible, the prevalent notion that the Queen's private inclinations and public professions did not correspond, Cromarty related to the Parliament the experience he had derived from conversations with her Majesty. He was convinced, he said, that such double dealing as that which was imputed to her, was hateful to her soul. She had personally assured him that nothing could please her better than that her subjects should give her credit for sincerity, and act according to her recommendations.†

* Boyer.

† Boyer calls the Earl's an ambiguous and Burnet a long and idle speech.

In spite, however, of all that could be said, and all that had been done to propitiate refractory members, it was almost immediately apparent that Tweeddale's mission would be a failure. Hostility to England burned fiercely in the veins of nearly every Scotchman, and to dispel that frightful fever was far above the art of the State physician who had undertaken the cure. In truth, the common feeling of hatred towards the Southron proved strong enough to hold together for the time men who, without that iron bond, would have done nothing but curse and revile each other, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, zealots for the Revolution and fanatics who were intriguing for the restoration of the Prince of Wales. To resist an administration which had been created by English Ministers, men of all shades of opinion linked themselves together in one compact mass, and the motions of this phalanx were directed by Hamilton. Except over those members whom the Government had succeeded in attaching by powerful ties of interest, Tweeddale speedily found that he had no influence whatever; and such was the awe inspired by the phalanx that little dependence could be placed even upon these bought members. The approach of an important division generally operated as an epidemic among the ranks of the Government hirelings, so great was the number of absentees on the score of sudden illness. Tweeddale's position was in consequence even more distressing than had ever been that of Queensberry. At the second sitting of the Parliament, Hamilton proposed a resolution to postpone the nomination of a successor to the crown until a treaty had been arranged with England respecting the commerce and other affairs of Scotland; and this resolution, in spite of all that the Ministers could say, was carried by a large majority.*

The utmost that Tweeddale could now hope for was to obtain the supply. His next step would doubtless have been to prorogue a Parliament which was evidently bent on passing measures hostile to the connection of the country with England. But the Opposition was fully conscious of its superiority, and

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Lockhart's Memoirs; Lettres Historiques; Boyer. There can be little doubt that Hamilton imagined he was paying his court to the Queen by opposing her expressed will.

had determined to push its advantage to a complete triumph. To the intense mortification of the Ministers, that Act of Security to which the Queen had refused her consent in the previous session, was again brought forward. It was carried by the Earl of Roxburgh—a young nobleman who had been rewarded for his zeal against Government by a place under Government, but who still remained as stout an opponent of the Government as before, that the Bill of Supply and the Act of Security should lie on the table together until the Commissioner had received instructions with reference to the last mentioned. The Ministry were placed by this method of tacking in a dilemma as embarrassing as it is possible to conceive. It might seem at first sight the maddest of counsels to recommend the Queen to pass the Act of Security. The main provision in that Act was that the same person who was successor to the crown of England should not be chosen successor to the crown of Scotland, unless within the lifetime of her present Majesty a treaty should be concluded to secure the liberty, religion, and trade of the Scottish people. There was then little prospect that the two kingdoms would come to terms. Negotiations, it is true, had been carrying on for a very long while. Commissioners appointed on either side had met repeatedly, but had invariably separated with the conviction that the antagonism of the two nations on points of religion and commerce made agreement impossible. The conference which had been held in London two years before could hardly be considered as having brought matters nearer to a conclusion; for although on some minor questions there might be accord, the Commissioners had fallen out the moment that the subject of commerce had been brought on the carpet, and had not even dared to approach the still more delicate subject of religion. Since that hapless conference the animosities of the two nations had waxed fiercer than ever. It was not likely that Scotland would now be disposed to ask less, or England to concede more than formerly. If then, as the case probably would be, no treaty was concluded in the lifetime of Anne, a separation between the two crowns would ensue upon her demise. The English, unless they chose to put up with the loss of a kingdom which had been united to their crown for a century, would have

to conquer Scotland. Nor had the Scottish Parliament overlooked this contingency that the country would have to fight for its independence. A clause in the Act of Security enjoined upon all the heritors and burghs in the kingdom to see that the fencible men in their districts were provided with firearms, and drilled at least once a month.

Yet, notwithstanding the terrible consequences which might result from the Act of Security, the Ministers were unanimous in advising the Queen to give her assent to it; nor, when both sides are fairly considered, will it be doubted that of two evils they chose the least. The Act of Security might at some time hereafter breed a war between England and Scotland; but if the Queen refused to give it her assent, the Parliament would withhold from her the Bill of Supply. The consequence of this would be that a French army would, almost to a certainty, invade Scotland before three months were over. The military force of the kingdom would have to be disbanded. It is true that the sum required for keeping up the three thousand men in garrison was but a trifle; that it could have been spared from the finances of England almost without being missed: but the temper of the Scottish soldiery was too well known to doubt that pay which was suspected to issue from the English treasury, would be rejected by officers and men. There was a chance that the evils likely to result from the Act of Security might be averted. The fury of the two nations might subside. A treaty might in some manner be arranged. But if the Act were refused, and as a consequence the Bill of Supply were withheld, France would be soon assisting Scotland to throw off her allegiance.

For ten anxious days the Parliament had not met. Upon the 6th of August it reassembled, and Tweeddale announced from the throne that her Majesty had been prevailed upon to give her consent to the Act of Security. Both that Act, and the Bill of Supply, were immediately put through the remaining stages, and were presented simultaneously to the Commissioner to be touched with the sceptre.*

* See the remarks of Burnet. Godolphin counselled with great reluctance the passing of this bill. Whigs and Tories united in condemning his weakness. See Dartmouth's note on Burnet.

The Ministers might now expect, not unreasonably, that after so ample and so humiliating a concession made by England to Scottish national feelings, the Estates would have proceeded in their work of legislating with minds considerably softened towards the sister country. They were bitterly disappointed. The passions of men had been heated to a pitch from which it was not possible they should cool without the lapse of a considerable time. The concession which had just been made to them, they, while in this mood, interpreted only as a sign of their enemy's weakness, and eagerly pushed on in quest of further triumphs. Four days after Tweeddale had assented to the Act of Security, the Parliament, at the instigation of the fanatical Fletcher, passed a resolution that the proceedings of the English House of Lords upon the subject of the plot were a reflection upon the sovereignty, honour, and independence of Scotland. But to measure words with the English aristocracy was not enough to content the Scotch patriots. It was necessary to strike a blow which would be felt by the entire English nation. An Act was brought forward for permitting the exportation of wool, with the design of putting the cheap Scottish produce in competition with the produce of England. The irritation which such a measure would be certain to excite among the farmers and merchants of the southern kingdom was justly calculated. But the Opposition contained a leaven of sensible and temperate men, who began now to fear that matters were being pushed a little too far. The Act, in passing through its stages, was deprived of a portion of its venom by the insertion of a clause which imposed an additional duty upon the exportation of wool. To Tweeddale and his friends it had now become clear that no good and much probability of harm would ensue by suffering the Parliament to continue its session, and it was therefore prorogued on the 27th of August.*

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Lockhart; Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

CHAPTER IX.

On the 23rd of October the English Parliament reassembled at Westminster. The great victory had added enormously to the popularity of the administration; yet the prospects of a quiet session were clouded. The Tories of the Lower House, irritated by the rejection of their favourite bill against occasional conformity, had given plain indications of being in a jealous and vindictive mood, and of a desire to continue their contest with the Peers. Anne did her best, under these circumstances, to persuade her subjects to lay aside their differences. She spoke of the remarkable success which had in the summer attended her arms. She earnestly hoped that so fair an opportunity of securing the safety of the country and of all Europe would not be lost by indulging in domestic contention. "It is plain," she said, "that our enemies have now no other hopes than what spring from our divisions."*

The Upper House, in high good humour, at once sent up an address lauding her Majesty's wisdom in enthusiastic language, and congratulating her upon the success which had attended her arms under the conduct of the Duke of Marlborough. The Commons revealed a very different spirit. It seems to have been felt that to omit in this address all mention of the victory and of the hero who had been instrumental in achieving it, would have excited rather too much wonder and indignation in the public. Yet the zealous Tories who crowded the benches could not bring themselves to lavish unqualified praise upon a man who was evidently so little of a partisan of theirs, and who was indeed vehemently suspected of being already half a Whig. They accordingly adopted a compromise between their inclinations and their dread of national feeling. Her Majesty was in

* Parliamentary History.

a single sentence congratulated upon the victory achieved by Marlborough and the naval victory achieved by Rooke.* That Rooke had won a victory was news to most Englishmen. He had fought the French fleet it is true, like a brave seaman, and had brought home his ships. But he had taken no prizes; he could not even claim to have sent a single hostile vessel to the bottom: Toulouse still continued to career the Mediterranean; and so dubious in fact was the result of the encounter, that the courts of France and Spain had not been ashamed to claim the advantage.

Notwithstanding this exhibition of temper the supplies for carrying on the war were voted on a liberal scale. It was determined that the army and navy should be maintained in the same state of efficiency as they had been kept during the year that was closing. Two millions two hundred thousand pounds were to be attributed to the navy, and two millions four hundred thousand pounds to the army. As the revenue might be expected to fall short of the necessary amount by nearly a million, it was resolved to cover the deficiency by a sale of annuities.†

But that this liberality should be entirely gratuitous was not exactly the intention of a large number of the members. In the minds of most of the honest, heavy, church-going squires, who formed so considerable an element in this Parliament, the power of persecuting the Dissenters was, as an object to be attained, of far more importance than the humiliation of France. Why the Whigs of the Upper House should persist in rejecting their bill against occasional conformity was incomprehensible to these bigots, except on the principle that Whigs were naturally opposed to every measure that was right and proper. Burnet and Somers might speak as long as they liked against the bill, but their speeches, after all, amounted to nothing more than a defence of hypocrisy and profanity. Was it not plain, then, that men so opposed to do what was right, should be forced into doing it? There was a method by which the bill could be driven through the Upper House. It could be tacked

* Parliamentary History; Burnet. Boyer has some pungent remarks on the address. Lettres Historiques.

† Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Luttrell's Diary.

to the land tax bill. The Whigs would then be put to the alternative, either of giving up the cause of unscrupulous rogues, or of giving up that war which they were so fond of asserting was necessary to preserve the liberties of Europe, to keep out the Pretender and insure the Protestant succession.

A meeting of the Tory members was held at a tavern called the Vine, situated in Long Acre. It was resolved that the House should be moved to tack the bill, which had already passed a first reading, to the land tax bill, and that in this state it should be sent up to the Peers. The motion was accordingly made by William Bromley, one of the most distinguished leaders of the High Church party. The debate held long, and was characterised by the utmost vehemence in the speakers; for on the result of the division might seem to depend the destinies not only of England but of all Europe. What course the Lords would take, if the motion were carried in the affirmative, was matter of the most anxious speculation. To adopt both bills would plainly be fatal to the dignity and independence of their order; for not two years since, and in expectation of an attempt of this nature, they had made it a standing order that tacking was an infringement of their privileges. Yet if they were resolute not to pass the Bill of Supply, while tacked to the bill against occasional conformity, the funds which were to provide for the ensuing campaign would be stopped until the two Houses could adjust their differences. The Whigs and some of the more sensible Tories of the Lower House exerted themselves strenuously to prevent such a calamity as would be occasioned by the success of the motion. "A division between our two Houses at this moment," urged Cutts, who had just returned from abroad with a halo of glory surrounding him inferior only in brilliance to Marlborough's, "would be as great an advantage to the French king as that we gained over him at Blenheim was to us." "We are venturing the safety of England, nay, of all Europe upon this single vote," remarked Henry Boyle, who then held the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. "The troops of the King of Prussia," said the Secretary Hedges, "are actually on the march to relieve the Duke of Savoy. If they hear that you are obstructing the

money bills, they will instantly halt, and the Duke will be ruined." That arguments of this nature had much weight with the zealots who were determined to carry their point at all hazards may well be doubted. There was another circumstance, however, that must have forced itself on the minds even of the most dull and fanatical. The third year of the Parliament was drawing to a close. In a few weeks every member would be compelled to resort to his constituents for re-election; and to fly in the face of public feeling at this conjuncture might not therefore be prudent, except to the holders of pocket boroughs. Moved by this consideration, many Tories deserted from the ranks of the tackers; so many indeed as to excite a sarcastic inquiry whether the deserters had once been as convinced as they professed themselves to be, of the reasonableness and necessity of the bill. At a late hour the House divided, and two hundred and fifty-one votes were given against the tack. The list included the names of some of the most distinguished members of the Tory party,—Simon Harcourt, the polished advocate, Rooke, renowned for seamanship and courage, Harley, and St. John. The supporters of the motion were only a hundred and thirty-four.*

For the third time the bill was passed, and sent up to the Lords. Its opponents in that assembly had increased. Burnet spoke against it with his usual ability, and it was rejected by a majority of twenty-one votes.†

In the Upper House, meanwhile, an attempt had been made to throw discredit upon the administration. Haversham, a nobleman who had been raised to the peerage by William, had been not more than three years back an ardent Whig, and had espoused the cause of Somers and Montague with so much warmth as deeply to offend the House of Commons. His

* Parliamentary History; Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Luttrell; Burnet. Oldmixon gives a list of the tackers. "Those unhappy 134," he says, "became so odious to the nation, that nearly fifty of them were thrown out at the next elections."

† Anne attended in the Upper House to hear the debate. Burnet says, "The Queen began this winter to come to the House of Lords upon great occasions to hear their debates, which, as it was of good use for her better information, so it was very serviceable into bringing the House into better order." Lettres Historiques.

intolerance, however, had failed to attract the esteem or the confidence of the party to which he belonged; for his abilities were not considered great, and his conceit of his powers was immoderate. Thus rejected, the acrimonious Whig thought proper to change sides, and to join with the acrimonious Tories in attacking the administration. His first harangue was ushered in with a pomp which had the desired effect of exciting curiosity. He had, he observed, matter of deep importance to lay before their lordships; but he would reserve his statement until there was a fuller attendance. Three days later he was able to deliver his sentiments in an unusually full House.

After a brief mention of Marlborough and his victory in that sneering fashion which the Tories generally adopted when compelled to speak of the hero, Haversham passed to a subject more fertile in causes of complaint. The navy, he remarked, the glory and guard of the country, was diverted from its principal object, that of protecting our trade and our coasts. French privateers swarmed in the Channel, and preyed upon our merchant ships. The enemy's boldness had increased to such a height that our men-of-war were captured even in their soundings. Nay, he had a witness at the door to prove that the ships of the Count de Toulouse had actually supplied themselves with stores from England and Ireland. Let the victories on shore be what they might, no one could say that the country was in safety while France was thus powerful at sea. And as to the internal state of England, it was evident that the coin was decreasing. If such vast exportations of it were much longer continued, there would be little or none left. France might be beaten, but England would be beggared. Haversham concluded his oration by arraigning the conduct of the administration in relation to the affairs of Scotland. It was universally known, he argued, that the cause which delayed the settlement of the succession to that kingdom was the prevalence of the opinion that the measure was not sincerely desired either by the Scotch or the English Ministry. And was there not good ground for forming this opinion? Could any reasonable person believe that her Majesty would have been advised to pass the Act of Security by Ministers who were really anxious

to promote the succession of that family which had been appointed to inherit the English crown?*

Three charges were thus made against the Ministers,—their mismanagement of the navy, their extravagance in conducting the war, and the duplicity of their dealings with Scotland. The Whigs were not indisposed to examine with all seriousness into the first of these charges; for the actual management of naval affairs was notoriously in the hands of one of the most active and vehement Tories of the party. George Churchill, a younger brother of Marlborough, and a living wonder to mankind how the same parents could have given birth to two sons so utterly dissimilar in character, had been appointed a member of that Council whose duty it was to assist Prince George in his office of Lord High Admiral. He had managed to acquire over the mind of his Royal Highness an influence as great as that which his sister-in-law had acquired over the mind of the Queen. A committee was therefore named to examine into the management of the navy, and that committee in the space of two months was enabled to lay before their lordships the result of their inquiries. That English commerce suffered grievously from the activity and daring of the French privateers and men-of-war, was a fact that could not be denied. At one time during the winter no less than fifty vessels, part of a merchant fleet returning under escort from the West Indies, were captured by a few French ships. The merchants were positive that such disasters arose from the circumstance that the Lords of the Admiralty persisted in choosing the worst sailers in the fleet to act as convoy; and thought it disgraceful that, with a navy far exceeding all the other navies of Europe together, the country should sustain any losses by sea at all. Into this matter, however, the committee did not think it prudent to push inquiries. It would have been difficult to find fault with the arrangements of the Admiralty without seeming to reflect upon that exalted personage who was nominally at the head of the Admiralty; and the faintest reflection upon the Prince, it was certain, would be warmly resented by her Majesty. The nation at large might console itself with the

* Haversham was in the habit of printing his speeches. They are always given in the Parliamentary History and Boyer.

knowledge that, although its merchants did occasionally sustain some losses, those losses were trifling when compared with the number and value of the French and Spanish prizes that were continually being brought into port.*

The complaint as to the expenditure occasioned by the war was echoed by Rochester, who dwelt gloomily upon the misery that would result from the decrease of the precious metals in the country. "There is certainly one way," replied Godolphin with more vivacity than he usually displayed, "of checking the exportation of coin; and that is by making peace with France. But then I leave it to the consideration of any wise man whether we shall not be hereafter in danger of losing not only all our coin but all our land to boot."†

But the portion of Haversham's harangue which excited most attention, was that which arraigned the conduct of the Ministers in reference to Scotland. The position indeed in which the two kingdoms now stood towards each other, was such as rendered discussion inevitable. That the Queen should have been induced to pass an Act so openly hostile to England as the Act of Security had excited universal surprise, and in the Tories much indignation. On the 29th of November, the Peers, in a grand committee of the whole House, took the subject into consideration. Anne herself sat in the gallery to hear the debate. Her presence, Godolphin hoped, would moderate the violence of the tempest which was likely to arise. Rochester and Nottingham expatiated with their usual acrimony upon the evils to which the Scotch Act would give birth. They were answered that the Act was granted the Scots to prevent a rebellion. "If," they retorted, "the Scots had chosen, before obtaining this Act, to rebel, they would have been unarmed. If they had a mind to do so now, they might, under cover of this Act, supply themselves with what arms or necessaries of war they pleased." In the midst of the controversy Nottingham, in alluding to the Treaty of Partition, dropped some unguarded words that sounded like an imputa-

* Burnet. In the Lettres Historiques it is remarked, "Pour ce qui est des vaisseaux que les Français peuvent prendre sur les Anglais, ils ne sont point à mettre en paralièle ni en nombre ni en valeur à ceux que les Anglais prennent sur eux."

† Boyer.

tion upon King William. The Whigs instantly sprang to arms. "It is unbecoming of any member of this House," said Somers, "to sully the memory of so great a prince. I doubt not that the person who can reflect upon King William in the presence of his successor, will do the same by her present Majesty when she is gone." Mohun, the most intemperate of the Whigs, was with difficulty restrained by wiser men from proposing to send Nottingham to the Tower.*

After several sittings the sense of the House appeared in a series of resolutions. It was determined to empower her Majesty by Act of Parliament to name commissioners to treat for an union with Scotland. It was at the same time decided to pass other Acts the tendencies of which would, it was thought, increase the desire of the Scots for an union. Natives of Scotland should for the future be treated as aliens in England and her plantations. The importation of Scottish cattle into England and the export of English wool into Scotland should cease. Strict orders should also be given to her Majesty's cruisers to take all ships which they might find carrying on a trade between Scotland and France.†

The debates of the Commons upon the same subject began immediately after the debates of the Lords had ended, and after extending over a month, produced very similar resolutions. The Lords had already passed their bill authorizing the Queen to appoint commissioners to treat for an union. But the Commons, in their present spirit of antagonism to the Upper House, preferred to push on a bill of their own. It was passed, sent up to the Peers, and was in a few days, to the surprise of many who surmised that the rival bills would entail a dispute between the two Houses as to which bill should have the precedence, returned approved without any amendments. The Lords had, in a matter of such vital importance to the commonwealth, wisely and patriotically determined to overlook any affront to their dignity, and had agreed to forego their own bill. It was necessary, however, in view of the inflamed state of feeling which prevailed in Scotland, to provide for the not improbable contingency that the two countries might shortly be at war.

* Parliamentary History; Boyer.
† Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Luttrell's Diary.

A request was therefore made to Anne that she would give immediate orders for strengthening the defences of the border towns, and for calling the militia of the northern counties into the field.*

The most important business of the Parliament was now happily completed. The bills for providing funds for the prosecution of the war had been passed. An union between England and Scotland, the only satisfactory settlement of the disputes between the two kingdoms that seemed possible, was once more put in train. While these matters were under deliberation, the Lords had prudently avoided every subject which might occasion a dispute between the two Houses. They now thought it high time to review certain proceedings taken by the Commons at the commencement of the session in manifest derogation of the authority of their House as the supreme court of appeal in the realm; which, in the opinion of the two lawyers most renowned in that generation for wisdom and learning, were a violation of the constitution, and which the whole country was denouncing as arbitrary and tyrannical in the highest degree.

Ashby, the Aylesbury man, had, after the decision of the House of Lords in his favour, sued out execution for the damages awarded him against the returning officers who had refused to record his vote. It would have been well for the peace of the country if those who were urging him on would have rested satisfied with the decision they had obtained: for nothing was more evident than that the Commons were determined to maintain the real or fancied privileges of their House, and would visit their wrath upon any one who should presume to infringe upon those privileges. It is probable that the attitude assumed by the Commons was the very circumstance that decided Ashby's instigators to proceed. Of what avail was it to have obtained a victory when the defeated party, so far from acknowledging defeat, was announcing its resolution to prevent any one from reaping the fruits of that victory? The attack must be renewed until the Commons should confess themselves beaten, until the right of electors to vote for members of Parliament, as a right cognisable in a court of common law, should

* Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Burnet.

have been substantiated so clearly that no future House of Commons would venture to impugn that right. Accordingly, in the course of the summer, five obscure persons were put forward as plaintiffs against White and the other returning officers. Their pleas were similar to those which had been already urged in the case of Ashby; and the actions were still pending when the Parliament reassembled.*

The Commons soon proceeded to wreak their vengeance upon all who had dared to act in contravention to the resolutions they had passed in the previous session. The plaintiffs and their attorney were summoned to the bar of the House, were declared guilty of prosecuting an action at law in contempt of the jurisdiction and in breach of the known privileges of the House, and were committed to Newgate. Their incarceration they could afford to bear with equanimity. They found themselves raised on a sudden to the enviable position of martyrs in the cause of liberty, without any real danger to their persons, and passed their time pleasantly in receiving visitors and feasting upon the liberal fare which was provided by their patrons and prompters. The instigators of the actions proceeded with praiseworthy deliberation and patience. They suffered their plaintiffs to remain quietly in prison during two months. At the expiration of that period the money bills had been all passed, the Scotch business had been got through, and it was then judged that the interests of the nation would not suffer if the contest with the House of Commons were resumed. The prisoners applied to the Lord Keeper for a writ of habeas corpus. It was granted, as of course, and was made returnable to the Court of Queen's Bench. The judges of that court were much perplexed how to act. They had now no alternative but to deliver their opinions upon the question whether a court of law had power to deal with the case of a prisoner committed under the warrant of the Speaker of the House of Commons. If they decided that they had no such power, they admitted the superiority of another tribunal of unascertained judicial

* The proceedings in this important case are reported at great length in Howell's State Trials and in Boyer, Burnet, and the note of Speaker Onslow. See also the remarks in Hallam's Constitutional History and in Lord Campbell's Life of Chief Justice Holt. The great patron and prompter of the Aylesbury men was supposed to be Wharton.

authority. The Habeas Corpus Act, that puissant guardian of the liberty of the subject, might seem to have been passed in vain if the House of Commons could arrest and detain in custody whatever individuals it chose. Should they, on the other hand, determine that they had power to adjudicate in the cases of all prisoners, it would become their duty to brave the wrath of the House, and to release the applicants, who had clearly committed no crime known to the common law.

The judges of the Queen's Bench deferred the day of trial as long as possible in order to fortify themselves with all the learning on the subject. They likewise consulted their brethren of the Common Pleas and Exchequer. Upon the appointed day four eminent Whig members of the bar—Page, Montague, Lechmere, and Denton—appeared as counsel for the prisoners. The terms of the Speaker's warrant of commitment were severely scrutinised. "I am at a loss to understand," argued Montague with some ingenuity, "how to bring an action can be against the privileges of the House. The House can have no privilege which is contrary to law, and I am sure that the law permits every one to bring an action."

Three of the four judges of the court held, however, that they had no jurisdiction in the case of prisoners committed by the House of Commons, and this decision appears to have been in accordance with the opinions of the eight judges of the other superior courts. Holt stood alone in his conclusion that the prisoners ought to be discharged. Neither House of Parliament, he ruled, had separately the power of disposing either of the liberty or property of the subject. The customs and privileges of the Houses were but a part of the law of the land, and fell therefore under the jurisdiction of the appointed administrators of the law. The noble speech in which this judgment was pronounced, glowing, as it did, with manly zeal for the authority of his office and for the liberties of the people, deservedly raised the Chief Justice to the highest point in the esteem of his contemporaries, and should cause his name to be for ever remembered with peculiar affection. Nevertheless, that the judgment was wrong in principle seems now to be the general opinion. The power of the Speaker of the House of Commons to commit to prison any person who, in the opinion

of the House, has contemned its authority or violated its privileges is established by the evidence of immemorial usage. It is, moreover, a reasonable power absolutely necessary to maintain the authority of an assembly of the highest national importance. Yet if every prisoner so committed had the right of bringing his case before the ordinary judges, and those judges could examine into the merits of the case, and discharge the applicant if it should appear to them that he had not offended against any law of the land, it is plain that the Speaker's power of commitment would be of little value. Instances can undoubtedly be shown in which the House has exerted this power in a very arbitrary and tyrannical manner. But the remedy against any such abuses of authority is not far to seek. Glaring injustice or harshness can never be committed in this country without exciting indignation. At certain periods each member of the elective House is compelled to recur to his constituents, and according as his acts shall have been approved or disapproved will depend his chance of re-election. With this check in the hands of the people, there can be little fear that the power of arresting individuals will be to any great extent abused by any House of Commons.

The case, however, was not even yet at an end. The plaintiffs being remanded to Newgate, their advisers determined upon an appeal to the House of Lords, and applied in the usual manner to the sovereign for a writ of error. A new point now arose. The Tory peers were generally anxious to prevent the case from being brought into their House, where the judgment of the court below ran a strong chance of being reversed by their Whig rivals. Did it lie in the discretion of the sovereign to grant or refuse a writ of error? In other words, was the writ issued merely as a matter of grace, or was it one which every subject could demand as a right, and which no sovereign could refuse without incurring the imputation of obstructing the course of justice? Wright, the Lord Keeper, consulted the twelve judges of the superior courts, and found them almost unanimously of opinion that, in civil matters, the writ when applied for ought not to be withheld. Again, therefore, the Commons had the mortification to discover that questions of which they had fancied themselves sole judges would

be brought under the cognizance of the Lords as a court of law. They sent up an address to the Queen which excited no little derision in their opponents. They had, they said, just expressed their duty to her Majesty by the despatch they had given to the supplies, and they trusted therefore that she would not grant any writ of error that would tend to overthrow their undoubted rights and privileges. The reply of Anne, that she would carefully consider what it was proper for her to do, was interpreted as a refusal of this request, and a long and angry debate ensued. It ended in a resolution that the four counsellors who had pleaded on the return of the habeas corpus had, by so doing, committed a breach of privilege, and the sergeant-at-arms was instructed to arrest them. The officer promptly executed his instructions. Montague and Denton were found at their chambers. Page, however, was gone no one would tell whither. Lechmere, hearing the sergeant at his door, tied the sheets of his bed together, got out of a window on the second story, let himself down to the ground, and made his escape.

These proceedings of the Commons had not, however, been unexpected, and the prisoners in Newgate had already presented a petition to the Lords imploring the protection of the House for their counsel. The Lords, fully determined to uphold the authority of the laws and the authority of their own House as the supreme court of appeal, had at once passed resolutions that neither House of Parliament could by any vote or declaration arrogate to itself any new privilege; that every freeman of England, who conceived that he had suffered an injury, had the right to seek redress by action at law; that the prosecution of an action was no breach of Parliamentary privilege; that the House of Commons had, in committing the Aylesbury men to Newgate, assumed a legislative authority by pretending to attribute the force of a law to a mere declaration of its own; that every Englishman, who was imprisoned by any authority whatever, had an undoubted right to a writ of habeas corpus; that for the House of Commons to punish any person who assisted a prisoner to procure such a writ or to deter any one from pleading on the return of the writ, was a breach of the many good statutes provided for the liberty of the

subject; and that a writ of error was not one of grace but of right, and could not be denied without an obstruction of justice contrary to magna charta. These resolutions were communicated to the Commons, and a conference between the two Houses ensued. It broke up without result. Somers drew up with his usual force and clearness of style a narrative of the whole case, which the Lords presented to Anne in the form of an address. Her Majesty was requested, in conclusion, to give orders that the writ of error should issue. The position of the sovereign was now not a little embarrassing. It was obviously impossible to gratify one House without giving deadly offence to the other. There was, however, one way by which to escape from the dilemma. The Parliament had completed its most needful business. The money bills had been passed, and funds were now recoverable which would maintain the fleets and armies for a twelvemonth to come. The reply of Anne, therefore, was that she would have granted the writ desired but for the necessity in which she found herself to put an immediate end to the session. On the same day she prorogued the Parliament.

It was the last of the three years allotted by the Triennial Act for the existence of a Parliament. A fortnight afterwards the Parliament was dissolved, and the prisoners of the House of Commons recovered their liberty. A constitutional question of high importance was thus, after powerfully exciting the public mind, left undecided; and the contest between the courts of law and the House of Commons has never since been resumed. From the remarks which have occasionally fallen from the Bench and from lawyers of great eminence, it may be gathered that, if a similar case were to recur, the judges would refuse to set at liberty a person committed by either House of Parliament, and that, if an appeal were attempted, the Lords would decline to entertain it. To a wholesome respect of public opinion it has been undoubtedly owing, however, that peace has subsisted so long between the advocates for the supremacy of the law and the maintainers of privilege. While Parliaments are terminable at no distant period, members will be cautious how they strain privilege to unreasonable lengths; and while a House of Commons enjoys

the favour of the nation, judges will be wary how they question its privileges.

Viewing the matter on its less important side, as a mere artifice of the Whigs to get popularity, the actions against the returning officers had fully answered the purpose for which they were intended. The public saw only that men had been committed to prison by a Tory faction on no other grounds than those of bringing an action at law, and was not a little scandalised at such an arbitrary exercise of power. Holt, for his eloquent and magnanimous stand for the authority of the laws, became a great favourite. A story flew about to the delight of those who were credulous enough to believe it, how, while he was sitting in his court, the Speaker had appeared before him in all the pomp of his robes and his full-bottomed wig; how the Chief Justice had been summoned to the bar of the Commons to answer a charge of contempt; and how he had threatened the Speaker in return, that unless he returned to his chair in five minutes he would lay him by the heels in Newgate.* Public feeling, already aroused by the foolish and ungenerous cavils of the Tories at the fame of Marlborough, and their disposition to stop the supplies for party purposes, veered round, and became for the moment decidedly Whiggish. It was at this conjuncture that the writs were issued for the election of a fresh Parliament.

Marlborough had, in the meantime, set off upon that campaign which, in the opinion of his sanguine countrymen, was to bring the war to a close. That France could support the struggle much longer after such a year of disaster as she had just experienced, was generally thought most improbable. Her commerce, it was evident, was nearly annihilated. The manufactories for which she was renowned were for the most part stopped for want of markets in which to vend their productions. The impoverishment of the country, it was reported, was universal. Every province swarmed with beggars and brigands. The Government was in the utmost distress for money. Taxation was already at so high a point that it was useless to attempt to lay further burdens on the population. The bankers, who had more than once assisted the King in the

* Campbell's Life of Holt.

time of need, were determined to lend no more. Offers to pay fifteen, nay, twenty per cent. interest had been made to them in vain. The most tempting lottery loans that could be devised failed to attract subscribers. And even if the King could obtain sufficient money to clothe and feed his armies, where, it was asked, were soldiers now to be found? The supply of proper men must, after so many years of constant war, be drawing to a close.*

The truth really is that the misery prevailing in France was at this period even greater than her enemies supposed. Yet those Englishmen who assumed that because the country was plunged into such a state of wretchedness its fighting powers were exhausted, were greatly mistaken. Throughout the breathing time afforded by the winter, ministers, governors of provinces, recruiting officers, contractors, had been working like bees to fill up the huge gaps which had been made in the ranks of the armies, and to send the ships again to sea. During the year 1704 at least sixty thousand soldiers had been lost to France either on the plains of Germany or amid the sickly marshes of the Po, and it was necessary that the deficiency should at once be restored. The old monarch, quickly recovering from the shock occasioned by the first news of his reverses, settled down to his work in a calm and business-like spirit better deserving of the encomiums of his courtiers than those actions of unprincipled ambition which had formerly elicited their applause. He issued orders for raising eighty fresh regiments of infantry and fifty-four of cavalry. For this enormous levy the conscription was to provide, but only in the last resource. To attract volunteers it was stipulated that the term of service should be limited in their case to three years, after the expiration of which, exemption should be allowed them from the *taille* for five years. Great numbers of the starving peasantry closed with this liberal offer. The difficulty, in truth, was far less to find men than horses, of which no less than forty thousand had perished in the previous campaign. Either through the carelessness or the corruptibility of the German bnrgomasters, French agents had hitherto succeeded

* Such I gather from many sources were the opinions entertained by the Whigs, and to have been generally current in England.

in drawing large supplies of these animals from the other side of the Rhine. The Diet, however, had at length interfered, and had put an effectual stop to this traffic. Upon the resources of the kingdom, therefore, slightly aided by purchases made in Switzerland and Italy, Louis was compelled to fall back for the restoration of his cavalry regiments.*

The finances of the kingdom were in a condition that might well seem irremediable. It is no bad illustration of the determination of Louis to be everything in France that, during some years, this all-important part of the administration had been practically without a head. The King, in truth, hated to be served by really competent Ministers. He begrudged to men like Colbert the fame which they acquired in their departments. Men of talents, moreover, were apt to form judgments of their own, and to presume that they could guide the unerring judgment of his Majesty. All that a king needed was a secretary or clerk capable of receiving orders and transmitting them to the clerks below him, and such a clerk was Chamillart, who, in addition to his duties as Minister of War, was nominally Minister of Finance. Since the period of his appointment in 1699 the accounts of the Treasury had drifted into utter disorder. It would seem that the available revenues of the King amounted to about fifty or sixty millions of livres, and his present expenditure to three or even four times as much. It was necessary, therefore, to raise the difference by extraordinary means; and money was accordingly obtained, as need dictated, by one despotic device or another. The citizens of Paris were, to give an instance, accustomed to pay to the authorities of the city an annual rate for cleaning and lighting the streets. Early in 1704 they were ordered to pay into the royal treasury the amount of the rate for eighteen years, in consideration of which his Majesty would charge himself with the work. Another method of raising money which never failed to prove productive was the creation of new offices and selling them to the highest bidder. No French Minister was ever at a loss for a department in which some new court might be erected with an array of salaried presidents, secretaries, and advocates, licensed to find employment in

* Lettres Historiques.

interfering with commerce, reviving obsolete laws, and harrassing peaceable subjects. The practice of the French Government to sell places under itself had now been in existence during two centuries with mutual satisfaction to the seller and the purchaser. The Government obtained ready money, and the new official a fixed income, of which nothing short of treason or felony could deprive him, while the party from whom the salary was to be drawn, and which had to stand the chance of incompetency or dishonesty in the official, was that much-enduring beast of burden, the public. It is no slight testimony to the patience and loyalty of the French people that such an iniquitous system should have been suffered to continue even down to the Revolution.*

Still another plan by which Louis contrived to make large profits, was by re-coining the money in circulation and returning the pieces to the public at an enhanced value. In 1701 the value of the louis d'or and of the crown stood, the former at thirteen livres, the latter at three livres four sous. The King ordered his subjects to carry their specie to the mint. There it was melted and re-coined, and by a royal edict the value of the new louis d'or, of precisely the same weight as its predecessor, was declared to be fourteen livres, and the value of the new crown three livres ten sous. At this estimation the money was returned to the public, and his Majesty pocketed the difference in value between the old coinage and the new. His profit on the transaction should have amounted to nearly thirty millions of livres; but, unhappily for the success of the scheme, sharp speculators outside France determined to share the gain with him. Private coining presses were set up in England and Holland, which worked as fast or faster than his Majesty's, and out of old livres and crowns produced new pieces undistinguishable from those which issued from the French mint. The profits of the King were, however, sufficiently large to tempt him to repeat the operation in 1704, and more than once afterwards in the course of the war. While the re-coining was in process the mint issued its notes for the amount received, and

* Lettres Historiques; Forbonnais; Sismondi, Histoire des Français; St. Simon. Notices of the creation of fresh offices occur almost every month in the Lettres Historiques, article France.

as it was understood that the value expressed upon each note was represented by bullion, they at first circulated freely at par. But the Government having made the discovery that paper can, while credit remains good, supply the place of coin, was tempted to avail itself too largely of this means of encountering difficulties. The mint kept issuing notes until the holders became alarmed. The public creditors came flocking to exchange their paper, and what closely approximated to the bankruptcy of the Government ensued.*

But the history of France shows nothing more clearly than that financial embarrassment and the paralysis of industry throughout the kingdom are no drawbacks to the formation of armies; nay, that the French armies have always been largest and most formidable at precisely those periods when the internal state of the country has been at the worst. A fair supply of recruits fell in during the autumn and winter. The year 1705 had scarcely commenced before thirty thousand men were marching to the south, partly to feed the army of Spain, and partly to fill up the gaps which pestilence had made in the ranks of Vendôme's force before Verrua. It was, however, upon the north-eastern frontier that the King's attention was mainly fixed. The enormous stores which the Allies had accumulated in Trèves left no doubt in his mind that an invasion of Lorraine would be attempted.† He now, with more wisdom or more fortune than usually attended his choice of commanders, selected his best marshal to confront Marlborough. To his strange blunder in substituting in the previous year two mere courtiers like Marsin and Tallard for the really able Villars, had been, beyond doubt, owing the terrible reverse which befell the French arms in Germany. It is impossible to avoid the reflection that, had Villars remained with the Elector, the fine Gallo-Bavarian army would never have been beaten so completely and so ignominiously as at Blenheim.

That marshal had, while his colleagues were bringing ruin on their master's interests in Germany, been advantageously employed in quelling the revolt in the Cevennes. The plan he

* Lettres Historiques. After the re-coining in 1704, the value of the louis d'or was stated to be fifteen livres and of the crown (ecu) four livres.

† Lettres Historiques; Campagnes de Flandre et d'Allemagne; Mémoires de Villars.

pursued was both wiser and more humane than the plans which his predecessors had adopted. His conviction was that the cruel and wholesale executions, the massacres, the village-burnings, which Baville and Montrevel thought necessary to reduce the insurgents to submission, were nothing but blunders. The effect of such barbarity was to drive persons merely suspected of complicity with the rebels to join the insurgents from sheer despair of preserving their lives and their property, even if they remained quiet. The Marshal's first act was therefore to issue a proclamation that all rebels, or suspected persons, who came in and submitted, should have the option of living unmolested in the country, provided they could find some well-disposed person who would be responsible for their future conduct; or if they preferred, they might sell their possessions, and depart with the produce. This announcement he followed up by some bold movements of his troops who, divided into four parties, penetrated into mountain recesses which his predecessors had not ventured to explore. The insurgents were soon reduced to great distress for the means of subsistence, and in proportion as their difficulties increased, the promises of the Marshal held out more attractions. One of their most trusted leaders was gained over, another was killed in fight, a third was taken and executed. Villars would, however, engage only to spare the lives and property of those who submitted. To concede to them the free exercise of their mode of religious worship was wholly beyond his powers. Upon the folly of the Camisards in this respect he could look only with wonder and pity. The entire inhabitants of a village he would sometimes find clustered in adoration round a little girl seized with an epileptic fit, and who was supposed to be undergoing a visitation from the Holy Ghost. In the next village all the women would be running wildly about and crying out that the Devil was among them. The peculiar mania of the population he found to be chiefly fostered by a number of women who styled themselves prophetesses, and who, when they wished to be thought inspired, writhed their bodies and uttered unconnected and meaningless sentences. Twenty of these women he caused to be arrested, and one prophetess who ventured to exercise her gift in his presence he hanged for her audacity. But this severity was not

repeated. The Marshal, fortunately for the Camisards, was as little of a bigot as a Roman proconsul, and would not be provoked into ordering a massacre even when hymns reached his ears which made light of the saints and depreciated the Virgin. The results of his humane but vigorous policy were eminently successful. When at the close of 1704 he was recalled by Louis to be placed again at the head of a large army, the rebellion in the Cevennes had ceased to wear a serious complexion. The once numerous insurgents were reduced to a few bands of untameable and ferocious men who prowled about the forests or lurked in caves, and from time to time united for a foray upon the Catholics.* The commander whom Louis selected to replace Villars was Berwick, and the selection was unfortunate. Berwick, conscientious and honourable as he was in matters relating to his profession, inherited the cold heart and intolerant disposition of his father. Under his rule that system of cruelty which had before goaded the people to despair, recommenced. The insurgents, as a natural consequence, again became numerous and formidable, and the country was never quieted until it had been almost depopulated by successive massacres.

The army with which Villars was to provide for the defence of Luxemburg, Thionville, and Saar-louis was to have consisted of seventy-five thousand men; but when the battalions were collected they were found to fall short of this estimate by twenty thousand. Marsin was placed at the head of a smaller army in Alsace to keep in check the Imperial troops across the Rhine. Villeroi retained the command of the King's forces in the Netherlands; and Louis took care that, whatever deficiency there might be in other armies, the ranks of his favourite should be well filled. The Elector of Bavaria was, however, to exercise concurrent authority with him.†

By the commencement of April Marlborough had reached the Hague. Before parting with Eugene at Landau in the previous November, the two commanders had concerted their plans for the year about to open. It had been then arranged

* Mémoires de Villars. St. Simon criticises the Marshal's career in the Cevennes with his accustomed asperity.

† Mémoires de Villars; Campagnes de Flandre et d'Allemagne.

that, while the English and Dutch troops with the Danish and Hessian auxiliaries marched up the Moselle in the direction of Lorraine, the Duke of which country had expressed his hearty sympathy with the cause of the Allies, an Imperial force under Prince Louis should advance from the south by the route of the Saar. The consent of one party was, however, necessary to carrying this plan into execution. The States-general, and indeed the whole Dutch people, was strongly averse to any project which involved the withdrawal of its army from the territories of the Republic. It had been only by a kind of stratagem that Marlborough had in the previous year extorted the permission of the Dutch authorities to his leading their army to the Danube. The assurances he had then given, however, that, while he was acting elsewhere with an immense force, the French would be too exclusively occupied in following his movements to have leisure for an attack upon the Provinces, had been so fully verified that he had scarcely anticipated that similar objections would again be raised. He was now to find his mistake. The rout of a single French army could not dispel from the Dutch mind those images of terror which the enormous power of the French king, his energy, his ambition, his violence had been raising through fifty years. To men tormented by such apprehensions any scheme which led the Dutch troops away from the frontiers which it was the object of their existence to defend, appeared nothing but folly. The aim of Holland should be limited to the protection of her frontiers, and if fortune should be extraordinarily propitious, to the conquest of a few towns in the Netherlands which might serve as a further barrier in future against her restless enemy. If England would assist these enterprises with her troops and her money, her co-operation would be useful. But to send the major part of the forces to fight the French on the Danube or in Lorraine, was either a desertion of the interests of Holland for those of the Emperor, or was sheer Quixotism.*

It was not until a whole month had been passed in expostulating with the timid or selfish statesmen who raised objections

* Marlborough to Godolphin, April 21, May 2. Lamberty enumerates the constant difficulties Marlborough experienced from the Dutch officers, especially Slangenburg.

of this nature, that Marlborough extorted their permission to his taking with him the proportion of the Dutch troops he required. He then set out for Maestricht, held a review of the army, and sent forward his brother Churchill with the troops who were to act upon the Moselle.

These troops numbered about thirty thousand men, and were in excellent spirits. From Germany, however, now came accounts which made Marlborough sick at heart. The success of the campaign would probably depend upon the punctuality of Prince Louis of Baden. It was now the middle of May, and he had not yet collected one third part of his army. The reinforcements he expected, he explained, had not yet reached him. With a force so inconsiderable as that he now possessed it would be useless for him to move. The Allied officers, in their anger, accounted for the inaction of the Prince in various ways. Some thought that he was jealous of the fame of the English commander, and was determined not to act with him. Others declared that he had been bought by France. Marlborough seems to have concluded that the Prince was in a bad temper, and that by a little wheedling he might be brought round to undertake the part which had been assigned him.* He solicited an interview, and the Prince agreed to meet him at Kreuznach. Marlborough repaired to Coblenz; but just before the day appointed, an officer came to acquaint him that his Highness was suffering from a swelling in the leg, and had returned to his house at Rastadt. Determined to leave no means untried of pacifying a man whose co-operation was so essential, the patient hero set off in pursuit of the fugitive. Prince Louis received him with civility, and showed his guest over his house and grounds; but the accounts he gave of his army, and of the prospects of increasing it were not consoling.† At Vienna, in truth, all was in confusion. The Hungarian insurgents pressed the capital so closely as to render it necessary to keep the citizens constantly under arms. Every fresh battalion which the dilatory circles of the Empire sent in, was required either for service against these domestic enemies, or for reinforcing the army of which

* Marlborough to the Duchess and to Godolphin, May 6—17.

† Coxe's Memoirs; Marlborough to Godolphin, May 11—22. Both Boyer and Burnet declare that the Prince's sickness was all a pretence; but the poor man gave the best proof of the contrary by dying within a year.

Eugene had resumed the command in Italy.* It was tolerably certain that the requirements of Prince Louis in the west would be the very last which the Emperor, in his present necessities, would care to satisfy. Under these circumstances, Marlborough was forced to content himself with a promise by the Prince that in the ensuing month he would march to Trèves with about eight thousand men.

The aspect of affairs which presented itself to the Commander-in-Chief upon his return to the Moselle was not less dismal. The greater portion of the German troops in British and Dutch pay were yet on the road, and could not be expected to reach camp before the expiration of ten days. It was, however, imperatively necessary that the army should break up at once from the position it at present occupied. The horses had eaten up all the grass and young corn in the neighbourhood. A startling discovery had also been made. An inquiry which had been instituted into the state of the magazines had proved the signal for the superintendent to abscond to the enemy; and the fact had then been brought to light that the rascal had embezzled to such an extent, that the magazines were half empty.† Under these circumstances the army crossed the Moselle, and advanced in two columns directly against the position occupied by Villars upon some heights near the little town of Sirk. It was Marlborough's great hope that the French might be tempted to accept this invitation to a general engagement. He knew indeed that the Marshal, who had just received a reinforcement from Marsin, had more men than himself; but upon the courage, discipline and spirits of his own soldiers he relied with the most perfect confidence.‡ Villars appears to have been under a complete mistake as to the resources of his adversary. Under the impression that Marlborough had a numerical superiority he hastily withdrew some outlying regiments, and set himself busily to work in fortifying a position which was by nature almost impregnable. For a whole fortnight the two armies re-

* Lettres Historiques.

† Marlborough to Godolphin, May 22, June 2. Lamberty gives a long account of the causes which prevented the filling of the magazines.

‡ Marlborough to Godolphin, June 2—13. He says, "This condition of ours is fit to be known but by very few; but it would be very happy for us if the Marshal de Villars would venture a battle, for in all likelihood that would put us at ease."

mained in close juxtaposition, the French being encamped on the heights, and the Allies extended in the valley below.* Marlborough's force gradually increased by the arrival of the auxiliaries; but his hopes of tempting Villars out of the position he occupied grew less and less, and to attack him where he was would have been madness. It was now his intention to wait until the Prussians and the army of Prince Louis should join him, and then to invest Saarlouis, when intelligence from Holland forced him to turn his thoughts in another direction.

The large army under the Elector and Villeroi had suddenly made an advance, had recaptured Huy, and was threatening not only to overwhelm the Dutch forces which Overkirk retained at Maestricht, but to reconquer all the fortresses upon the Meuse. The States-general, in the greatest alarm at these movements of the enemy, wrote to Marlborough a pressing demand for the return of the thirty battalions in Dutch pay which had been entrusted to him.† The English commander at once made up his mind as to the course which he should take. His hopes of effecting anything upon the Moselle had now vanished. It seemed as if neither the Prussians nor the Imperialists would ever reach him. Prince Louis, he heard indeed, had set forward with his army; but after marching a day or two had found that the state of his health rendered it imperative that he should turn off to drink the waters of Schlangenbad. Even the siege of Saarlouis had now become an impossibility. Both horses to draw the artillery and ammunition carts were entirely wanting, and from the German princes, upon whom Marlborough had reckoned for a supply of these requisites, came nothing but excuses for their inability to meet his demands.‡ A panic in Holland, he knew moreover, could not be safely disregarded. It was at any time in the power of the States-general to conclude a treaty with France, which would destroy the advantages to Europe that had been gained by three years of successful warfare; and so surely as the standards of the French king approached the frontier of the Republic, would the clamour for

* Mémoires de Villars; Campagne d'Allemagne.

† Lamberty; Lettres Historiques.

‡ Several letters of the 15th and 16th June in the Marlborough Despatches; Marlborough to Eugene, June 11—22.

peace be raised by her statesmen.* Under these circumstances, therefore, Marlborough decided to return with his whole force to the Netherlands. The army broke up from its position near midnight on the 17th of June, and marched off in dead silence through a dreary downpour of rain. Villars heard nothing of the movement until it was reported to him in the morning, and then found that the Allies had made such good use of their time that not even a straggler was in sight. So promptly and secretly indeed was the retirement managed, that an envoy from the Duke of Lorraine who came to confer with Marlborough, had the mortification of being ushered into the presence of Villars, who had installed himself in the deserted camp.†

Within a fortnight the troops of Marlborough were filing over the Meuse a few miles above Maestricht. The mere rumour of their approach had saved Liege. The French had taken possession of the city, and had prepared their batteries against the citadel. They now fell back within their lines, a chain of defences, partly natural and partly artificial, which extended from Namur to Antwerp, and upon which the engineers and soldiers of the French king had been labouring for the last three years.

To force a passage through these lines, guarded as they were by an army of seventy thousand men, might seem a hazardous enterprise. Yet Marlborough determined that the attempt at least should be made. His failure upon the Moselle had annoyed him beyond measure. It was not only that a fine opportunity had been lost of attacking France on her weakest side, that the gasconnading Villars would be certain to claim the merit of having foiled the conqueror of Tallard and Marsin, that his own fame would be made to suffer for the negligence, the supineness, the jealousy, perhaps the treachery of the German princes. All this a mind constituted like Marlborough's could have supported with equanimity. Military glory and the prestige of being invincible were chiefly valuable to him in proportion as they might promote his interests at

* Coxe's Memoirs; Marlborough to the Duchess, June 16—27.

† Campagne d'Allemagne; Mémoires de Villars. The Marshal's exultation over this retreat of Marlborough's knew no bounds.

home. He had seen that a campaign so full of success as the last, had not wholly availed to save him from the malice of the Tories. What would the tackers now say, if a campaign, which was to have been the crowning glory of the war, should prove barren of a single triumph? His wife and other good-natured friends kept him, as usual, well informed of the rejoicings of discontented politicians over his ill success; and his first measure had been to endeavour to enlist the sympathies of the Queen, and to deter her, by a threat of his resignation, from listening to the voices of calumniators. "This vile, enormous faction vexes me so much," he wrote in a letter to Godolphin, evidently intended for her Majesty's perusal, "that I hope the Queen will after this campaign give me leave to retire, and end my days in praying for her prosperity, and making my own peace with God."* His complaints drew from Anne a letter of tender and womanly condolence with his disappointments, and kind prognostications that before the campaign was over something would happen to his satisfaction.† The reply of the hero was characteristic. With all that graceful and pathetic dignity of style of which he was a master, he repeated his wishes to retire from her service; he even urged the necessity of his retirement for her own good. His determination to stand aloof from parties, he represented, had made both parties his enemies. The heats and animosities which were the consequence of this enmity impeded public business.‡ But this offer to retire and this advice to accept his resignation were intended only to frighten her Majesty into the adoption of a policy scarcely less disagreeable to her feelings than would have been the loss of the Marlboroughs. The events of the last session of Parliament had convinced Marlborough and Godolphin that, so long as the Tories were dominant in the Lower House, everything was at hazard, and that it was an indispensable step to increase the number and influence of the Whigs, who, whatever might be their personal sympathies for the Commander-in-Chief or the Lord Treasurer, could at least be depended upon to support the war.

* Marlborough to Godolphin, June 13—24. There were some previous letters on the same subject which are not transcribed in Coxe's Memoirs.

† The Queen to Marlborough, June 12—25.

‡ Marlborough to the Queen, July 16—27.

The policy, accordingly, which Marlborough now recommended to Anne was to give encouragement, in such manner as Godolphin should suggest, to that faction which she dreaded as a queen, and abhorred as a devout and conscientious Churchwoman.

Meanwhile Marlborough determined, as far as lay in his power, to remove from the Tories all pretext for asserting that the campaign had been a failure. The first thing he did was to retake Huy, a matter in which he found little difficulty. He then, in conjunction with Overkirk, formed his plan for piercing the lines. The French were posted in brigades at various points, and Villeroi and the Elector had fixed their quarters in a position from whence they might readily advance to any part of the lines that seemed to be threatened. It was decided that the attack should be made at a point not far from Tirlemont, where the French, trusting to the immense strength of the defences, both natural and artificial, had stationed but a slender garrison. The earthwork in this quarter was high, and in front ran the little Gheet river, which was thought to be impassable except by bridges. It was essential to the success of the scheme that the hostile commanders should be first lured to a distance by a stratagem. Accordingly, on the morning of the 17th of July Overkirk marched away with the Dutch troops in the direction of Namur. The feint created exactly the impression that was desired. The Elector and Villeroi, apprehending that the attack would be made near the extremities of the lines, at once chose their station at a village at least twelve miles distant from the point where the assault was really to be made, and drew around them the principal part of their army. At nightfall the advanced guard of the Allies moved off in a direction opposite to that which had been taken by Overkirk. It was accompanied by a train of waggons laden with planks and beams for the construction of bridges, and by a thousand workmen. An hour or two later Marlborough, with the main body, broke up, and Overkirk at the same time recrossing the Mehaigne, followed in the rear.

The night was dark and foggy, and the guides who led the foremost regiments missed their way. It was, consequently, broad daylight before the grenadiers, who were in advance of

all, found themselves before the Castle of Wange, which guarded an opening in the lines on the other side of the Gheet. The thirty men who had charge of this fortress, scared by the apparition of an enemy, at once made their escape across the river, and disappeared within the lines. The grenadiers rushed after them. The entrance was closed by a strong barrier; but the guard had caught the alarm, and had fled. In a few minutes the active assailants were within the lines, were hewing at the barrier with hatchets, and pulling down the earthwork on either side to enlarge the opening. The workmen laid their bridges as fast as they could; but the troops, who had now got possession of the hamlets for some distance along the Gheet, could not brook the delay. At the hazard of life whole regiments waded through the river, scrambled up its steep and slippery banks, and scaled the lines.

Some French brigades, stationed at no great distance, were not long in hearing of what had occurred, and the Marquis d'Allegre, a distinguished cavalry officer, made his appearance with a considerable body of horse and foot. But it was now too late to repair the mischance. The Allies had entered the lines in great numbers. A sharp conflict, however, ensued. At one time Marlborough was in personal danger. A dragoon got near enough to aim a blow at him, but lost his balance in the act of striking, fell from his horse, and was seized by the Duke's attendants. In less than two hours all fighting was at an end. D'Allegre was a prisoner, and his men scouring away in hopes of reaching the main body, which, it was rumoured, was striving to retreat upon Louvain.*

In truth, the Elector and Villeroi had, as soon as they heard that they had been outmanœuvred, and that the Allies were within the lines, come promptly to the resolution of retiring upon Louvain, a customary city of refuge for beaten and overmatched armies. By a march kept up through twenty-four hours with scarcely an interval of repose, they succeeded in putting the swollen waters of the Dyle between them and their adversaries. Their escape, was, however, a narrow one. Before

* For the attack on the French lines see Marlborough to Harley, to the Duchess, and to Godolphin, all dated July 7—18; the Marlborough Despatches; the Lettres Historiques, which contain minute details; Lamberty; Boyer; Campagne de Flandre; St. Simon.

their rear guard had effected the passage of the river the advanced squadrons of the Allies were upon them. A thousand prisoners were made. The French encamped with their left wing touching the walls of the city, and at a short distance from the Dyle, which ran along their front.*

The weather now turned bad. For several days it rained so incessantly that the country in this flat region became a marsh, and the Dyle a barrier between the two armies which seemed to be impassable. But at length the sun shone again, the waters which had overflowed the meadows partially subsided, and the Duke, who was anxious to get possession of Louvain, decided that the time had come for forcing the passage of the Dyle. The Dutch deputies and generals stood aghast at his presumption. To cross a deep and rapid stream in the face of an enemy appeared to them an enterprise savouring of madness. The brain of the English commander must have been turned by his wonderful good fortune. In truth, the fears of the Dutch, although perhaps unfortunate for the general interest, seem to have been by no means unreasonable. It is not easy to perceive how the passage of this deep river and its adjacent marshes could have been effected without involving the Allies in a terrible sacrifice of life, assuming that the French displayed as much courage as they had displayed under less favourable conditions at Blenheim. Nor must it be forgotten that the consequences of a defeat sustained by the Allies were likely to be much more serious for the Dutch than for any other nation participating in the Alliance. The English and the German princes would be quit for the loss of a few thousand soldiers; but Holland would probably be invaded by the conquerors. These considerations account for much of the opposition constantly shown by the Dutch to a general engagement.† Marlborough, on the other hand, was so confident of his men, and so convinced of the despondency of the French, that all his thoughts were devoted to the one object of forcing on a battle; nor is it indeed improbable that, had he been allowed his own

* Lettres Historiques.

† Marlborough to Godolphin, July 12—23. In Lamberty may be read the constant opposition and hostile criticisms of the Dutch generals, especially Slangenberg, on almost every manœuvre of the Duke's.

way, he would have surmounted all difficulties, and achieved another great victory.

It was not until whole days had been lost in argument that the Dutch deputies gave a reluctant consent to the plan propounded by the Commander-in-Chief. But the Dutch generals remained as convinced of its impracticability as before. They were determined not to send their troops to be slaughtered by the French at the instigation of an Englishman, whose presumption had been raised to such a pitch by good fortune that he imagined he could achieve impossibilities. The Dutch battalions were indeed brought out of camp; but when the time for action came they stood motionless. Their commanders refused to give the orders to march. Again there was a consultation of deputies and generals. Slangenberg, who had always cherished a spite against Marlborough, expatiated with great vehemence upon the unreasonableness and cruelty of despatching their men to certain death. The civilians, utterly ignorant of the art of war, were afraid to disregard the opinions expressed by the generals; and in the end the troops were marched back to their quarters.*

With admirable self-command Marlborough concealed the vexation which he felt, and acquiesced in another plan for reaching the enemy which the Dutch generals themselves proposed. This was to march round the sources of the Dyle. His opinion was that the difficulties in the way of executing this plan would be found infinitely greater than the difficulties attending his own. But it would almost seem that his reliance on his men was such that, rather than lose an opportunity of fighting, he would have engaged under any circumstances of disadvantage. After a march of four days the army found itself in front of a small tributary of the Dyle, called the Ische, behind which was drawn up the army of the Elector and Villeroi. Those commanders had, during the short time they had occupied this position, done their best to render it secure. In truth, the sight of the intrenchments and batteries on the other side of the brook filled the Dutch authorities with dismay. Again they assembled in council, and the passage of the Ische was pronounced by all the Dutch generals except Overkirk to

* Hare's Journal; Coxe's Memoirs; Lamberty.

but not less impracticable than the passage of the Dyle. Marlborough was in an agony of mortification. To be forced to retire from an enemy after marching up within sight of him, and for the express purpose of engaging him, was too much even for his mild temper to endure patiently. He knew that Slangenberg, although for some reason maliciously disposed towards himself, was a brave and skilful officer. He tried to win him over by offering him the post of honour. He should lead the attacking columns himself. If he were reluctant to risk the lives of the soldiers of the States-general he should have two English battalions for every Dutch one. Slangenberg excused himself by saying that he could not speak English. "Then," replied Marlborough, "the German regiments shall be at your disposal." It was all in vain. The obstinate and angry man was proof both to argument and to flattery. His reply was delivered with such vehemence that only the words "murder and massacre" were distinguishable. The deputies, in accordance with the opinions expressed by their generals, finally decided that the enemy's position was too strong to be attacked with advantage.*

The next day the Allied army turned its back to the French. Marlborough's heart swelled high with grief and resentment. For the third time in this campaign he had been forced, either by the neglect of coadjutors or by the opposition of a clique, to retire from a position which he had chosen in the full expectation of reaping a glorious victory. To the States-general he wrote an account of his proceedings, and complained in gentle language of the inadequacy of the authority which they entrusted to him.† But to Godolphin he expressed his thoughts with less reserve. "It is next to impossible," he said, "to act offensively with this army, governed as it is. It is subversive

* Marlborough to Godolphin, July 29, August 9; St. John to Marlborough, August 18—29; Coxe's Memoirs.

† Marlborough to the States-general, August 19. The postscript is as follows:—"J'ai le cœur si plein que je ne saurais m'empêcher de représenter dans cette occasion à vos Hautes Puissances que je me trouve ici avec beaucoup moins d'autorité que quand j'avais l'honneur de commander leurs troupes l'année passée en Allemagne." See also the letters of the Dutch deputies and of Overkirk, who sided with Marlborough, in Lamberty. Chamillart, in a letter of the 6th September, remarks that he has but a mean opinion of Marlborough's capacity. His conduct in this campaign had destroyed the reputation he had acquired by the battle of Hochstadt.

of all discipline that, even when its general and I agree upon a plan, it should be in the power of subaltern officers to hinder its execution." His friends in England were deeply roused by the series of insults to which he had been subjected. Anne forthwith called a Privy Council.* The members were unanimously of opinion that an ambassador should be sent to remonstrate with the States. But before executing this design it was thought prudent to communicate with the Duke, and in the interval of delay which occurred Marlborough recovered his equanimity, and was his own sober calculating self again. A formal remonstrance would, he saw, be likely to diminish the good understanding prevailing between the two Governments and the two nations. It would afford, moreover, evidence of the way in which affairs were managed in the Allied army that would be certain to raise considerably the downcast spirits of the French. The project was, therefore, by his advice, abandoned. His complaints, however, gentle as they were, had not fallen unmarked to the ground. There was a strong party in the States who thought that the deputies had on this occasion been a little unreasonable, and a strong party in the nation, who were filled with indignation at the injustice of keeping the hero of Blenheim in leading-strings. Buys, the Pensioner of Amsterdam, at length judged it prudent to say something that might soothe the irritated feelings of the Commander-in-Chief, and paid him a visit. The States, he explained, would scarcely consent to abolish the practice of sending field-deputies with their army. It was an institution hallowed by long observance. It was indeed as old as the Republic itself. Even in the time of the late King not an engagement had been risked or a siege been attempted that had not previously been sanctioned by the deputies of the States. But matters had then been much better arranged. His Majesty took care that such persons should be chosen for the duty as he knew would offer no opposition to his plans, and it was possible that a similar arrangement might now be made again. As for Slangenberg, his Grace might depend upon it that the States

* Harley to Marlborough, August 18—29; Dutch politics. Upon a complaint of the envoy of the States-general all the copies of this work were seized; but a part is preserved by Lamberty; D—— deputies, a satire.

would in future take good care that he should not serve in the same army with him.*

The Allied army had meanwhile retraced its steps to the Gheet. All thoughts of attacking the Elector and Villeroi had been abandoned. The French generals, on their side, had no ambition to molest the victorious Allies, who, being thus left in quiet possession of the Netherlands east of the Dyle, brought their operations for this year to a close by capturing Tirlemont and two or three other fortified towns. When November came the troops were distributed for the winter among the newly-taken towns along the Demer.

* Marlborough to Harley, September 14—25.

CHAPTER X.

THE progress of the grand army had certainly disappointed a sanguine public. The Government had indeed availed itself of what matter there was for congratulation. A day of thanksgiving had been appointed for the victorious irruption into the French lines, and Anne had again repaired in state to St. Paul's.* For the meagre interest attaching to the news that came from the Netherlands the nation consoled itself by the increasing importance of that which came from Savoy, Spain, and Portugal. The patient but manly resistance which Victor Emmanuel with his little force was making to the devouring armies of France, the wonderful career of the adventurous Lord Peterborough, were themes upon which every tongue was expatiating.

The garrison of Verrua, after affording to Europe an example of gallant endurance during six months, had been at length forced to surrender at discretion. During the latter part of the siege the defenders had been exposed to the greatest hardships, for the vigilance of Vendôme had at last succeeded in frustrating all attempts made by the Duke to pass supplies into the beleaguered city. They had been nearly starved; they lay on the bare floor without even straw beneath them. Yet their sufferings were as nothing when compared with the sacrifices made by the French in capturing this second-rate fortress. Nearly thirteen thousand of the troops of Louis perished either from wounds or from the malaria arising from the marshes of the Po. Three thousand men were in the hospitals when the city surrendered. Eighty-six men lost their feet through frost-bite.†

* On the 23rd August. A full description of the procession and ceremonies is given by Boyer.

† Lettres Historiques; Botta, Storia d'Italia; Campagne d'Italie for 1704. The city surrendered on the 9th April.

From his station at Crescentino, Victor Amadeus had watched in sadness the brave defence of his garrison. Every courier brought to him the tidings of some new misfortune. His helpless towns were falling rapidly into the possession of the French. While Vendôme was engaged before Verrua, La Feuillade with another army was carrying out the orders given by Louis for the conquest of Savoy and Piedmont. Villafranca, after a short but strenuous resistance, was taken. Nice was invested. The chief anxiety of the Duke was to save Turin. After the fall of Verrua he established his head-quarters in the citadel; he strengthened the fortifications of the city; he warned every householder to provide himself with provisions for six months; and to make up for the deficiency of regular troops, he caused the citizens to be armed and trained. The French had, on their side, been for some time making preparations on a grand scale for the siege. The roads over the Alps were covered day and night by strings of mules laden with gunpowder and cannon-balls, meat and corn. By the close of September, La Feuillade, under orders from Vendôme, approached Turin, and drew his lines of circumvallation. But great as had been the efforts to place him in a position to make the siege, he found the means at his disposal wholly inadequate for the investment of so extensive and so well-fortified a city. He despatched to Louis a representation of the state of affairs. Vendôme, eager to obtain a crowning triumph, impatiently ordered his lieutenant to proceed with his work. But as La Feuillade was preparing to carry out the Marshal's instructions, his messenger returned from Versailles. The opinion of Vauban against undertaking the siege had, it seems, prevailed in the royal council over that of Vendôme, and the orders of La Feuillade now were to postpone the enterprise, and to send part of his men to reinforce the army with which the Marshal was step by step driving the Imperialists from the Milanese. In a few hours afterwards the besieging army, to the surprise and joy of the citizens, had disappeared from before Turin.*

It had seemed likely in the commencement of 1705 that the approaching season would witness the final triumph of the

* Lettres Historiques; Campagne d'Italie; Correspondence of the King and Chamillart with Vendôme and La Feuillade.

French in that struggle which had been so long kept up for the possession of northern Italy. The Imperial force had dwindled to a few thousand men. Forced back from the Secchia, they had sought refuge in the Ferrarese; but here they were on the dominions of the Church, and his Holiness was too completely in the French interest to extend his protection to the hardly-driven soldiers of the Emperor. He never ceased his importunities to them to depart until their commander, the Count of Leiningen, was wearied into a determination of seeking shelter elsewhere. They then marched into the Venetian territory of the Brescian, and quartered themselves in a few towns on the Lake of Guarda, where they submitted to be cooped up by a French detachment under the orders of the Grand Prior, the brother of Vendôme. At length, however, their prospects, which had seemed almost desperate, began to brighten. The cheering news came that the eight thousand men whom Marlborough had borrowed from the King of Prussia, were on their road to Italy, that reinforcements might soon be expected from Germany, and lastly that their former beloved commander, Eugene, would shortly be again at their head.*

The Prince made his appearance about the middle of April, and soon after his arrival came the Prussians. A misfortune, however, occurred at the very outset of the campaign. The town of Mirandola, the last conquest which the Imperialists retained in the Modenese, was captured before measures could be taken for its relief. The two months indeed which succeeded the arrival of Eugene, were consumed in petty skirmishes with the forces of the Grand Prior. But at length the Imperial army had swelled to a magnitude that enabled the Prince to assert his freedom. He then determined to march to the assistance of the Duke of Savoy. In the last week of June he set off, crossed the Oglio, and entered the Milanese. Hardly had he set foot in this territory, when the tidings reached him that Vendôme, with the principal portion of his troops, was marching to join the Grand Prior. The two brothers, in truth, soon afterwards effected a junction within a few miles of the Imperialist camp, and their combined forces far outnumbered

* Lettres Historiques (for 1704).

the army of the Prince. Vendôme, the most uncertain of commanders—at one time all sloth, at another all activity—was for the moment at his best. So skilful were his manœuvres, that Eugene, finding his position become more hazardous each day, decided at length to push on, at all hazards, for Piedmont. On the night of the 10th of August the Imperial army struck its tents, moved off in dead silence, and, after a march of thirty hours, broken only by one short interval of repose, approached the Adda. To the Prince's dismay this river proved to be both broader and swifter than accounts had led him to expect, and so much time was consumed in lashing together sufficient boats to form a bridge, that long before the work was concluded, the heads of the French columns were discerned in the rear. With an impassable stream in front, and a superior force behind, the situation seemed well-nigh desperate. But Eugene's hopes were revived by the reports extracted from some prisoners. The army behind him, he was informed, was only that of the Grand Prior. The Marshal, with the design of circumventing his antagonist, had separated from his brother, had hastened forward with the cavalry and artillery, had crossed the Adda by the bridge of Cassano, and was now lying in wait for the Prince on the opposite bank. The information that the Adda was rolling between the two French armies at once suggested a course of action. Quickly destroying the bridge that he had prepared, the Prince marched against the Grand Prior. He found his enemy posted on an island formed by a canal, which left the Adda a little above and fell into the river a little below the town of Cassano. The Imperialists dashed through the water, and attacked the French with such impetuosity that everything gave way before them. For a short time the victory seemed to be certain. But in struggling through the canal many of the soldiers had got their powder wet. Their fire was so feebly sustained, that the French, taking heart, rallied, charged, and regained much of the ground they had lost at the outset. A vexatious discovery was now also made by Eugene. Quick as had been his own march, that of Vendôme to rejoin his brother had been still quicker. The Marshal had penetrated the Prince's design with that sagacity which, at those seasons when he chose to exert his faculties, rendered him, as a

tactician, second to no general living, had raced back with his cavalry over the bridge of Cassano, and had joined the Grand Prior about the same time that the Imperialists came in sight. In spite, however, of this unexpected accession to the numbers of the enemy, Eugene's men pertinaciously renewed the attack. For nearly four hours the fortune of the day remained doubtful. Numerous standards and prisoners were taken on both sides. Several noblemen of the highest rank, and a crowd of distinguished officers, fell. Eugene was slightly wounded in the head. Vendôme, who was at one time in the thickest of the fight, narrowly escaped the bullets, which killed the pages in attendance upon him and the horse he bestrode. The Prince at length judged it expedient to bring the battle to a close by ordering his men to recross the canal.*

Each commander claimed the victory. Vendôme despatched his congratulations to Louis. Eugene wrote to inform Marlborough of his success. The result was that ten days after the battle the army of Villeroi and the army of the Allies were announcing to each other the victory of their friends by the roar of their cannon.† It can hardly be denied, however, that the advantage really was on the side of the French. Vendôme had effectually prevented Eugene from joining the Duke of Savoy, the main object of his march. Eugene had attacked him, had been forced to retire; and the loss of four thousand men who fell in the contest, was a grave subtraction from an army already too small for the requirements of the situation. It is not indeed improbable that the loss of the French was still greater than that of the Prince, for, in addition to the number of those who fell on the field, several squadrons of dragoons were said to have perished in the attempt to swim their horses across the Adda.

For six weeks longer the two armies remained within two

* The incidents of the battle of Cassano are given in the Lettres Historiques; Campagne d'Italie; Vendôme to the King, August 19; the King to the Elector of Bavaria, August 24; The circumstance that a battle was brought about at a time when an engagement was not desirable, is attributed to the Grand Prior disobeying the orders of his brother. Lamberty; Eugene to Marlborough, August 17; Dumont, Histoire Militaire du Prince Eugene.

† Marlborough to Godolphin, August 27, September 7. He says drily, "I wish the advantages were more considerable; however, I have ordered the army to be in battle array to-morrow, and shall fire all our cannon and small arms three times."

miles of each other. Vendôme, with that caution which at this period was the prominent characteristic of French generals when in the face of an enemy, busied himself in entrenching and fortifying his camp. Eugene, on the contrary, levelled all obstacles which impeded his freedom, and repaired the roads leading to his position, a policy which confirmed his antagonist in the belief that the Imperialists would renew the attack. At length, however, the Marshal was joined by La Feuillade, and the Prince then thought it advisable to retire to a place where he ran less danger of having his communications with Germany interrupted.

Events had thus proceeded somewhat untowardly in Italy. An unexpected piece of good fortune had, however, befallen the Allies in Spain. While the English public was discussing the battle of Cassano, arrived intelligence that Lord Peterborough had, in some marvellous manner, captured the fort of Monjuich, and would soon be in possession of Barcelona.

The Government had during the winter determined, chiefly of course by the advice of Marlborough, to send another expedition to the Gulf of Lyons, to see whether anything could be done to relieve Nice or otherwise to assist the Duke of Savoy. The person selected to command the five thousand troops who were to be put on board, was Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, one of the most extraordinary men of whom the history of any country makes mention. He was an eager, fiery-souled being, whom a feverish desire of astonishing the human race kept in perpetual motion. In what department he shone, whether as a soldier or a sailor, an orator, a conspirator, a spendthrift, a gallant, a philosopher or a hard rider, seems to have been of little moment to him so long as some extraordinary feat was performed. Born in 1658, he had, while still a schoolboy, alarmed his friends by an audacious display of Whiggism at a time when to be known for a Whig was about as conducive to length of days as to be known for a coiner or a burglar. He spent several years in the navy under Lord Torrington. He then became a soldier; and both in the sea and land services, gave proofs of intrepidity which made his comrades almost suspect his sanity. The reign of James found him startling the House of Lords with declamations against the unconstitutional

measures of the King. Unlike such prudent and time-serving politicians as Marlborough and Halifax, Mordaunt repaired openly to the Hague and proposed to William an immediate invasion of England. But the romantic character of the Earl had reached the Hague before him, and the Prince was on his guard. The brilliant schemes of the visitor were politely declined. That a man so mercurial should impress favourably a prince so sober-minded as William was indeed not to be expected. Throughout his subsequent reign Mordaunt was, beyond being rewarded with some lucrative posts, systematically passed over. Men said of him that his head was everlastingly teeming with more projects than it could hold, that his secrets were known to everybody, and that those against whom his projects were directed had generally time to take measures to frustrate them before the details for carrying them into execution had been arranged.*

On the 20th of June the English fleet reached the Tagus. Peterborough went on shore, and had an interview with Galway, who after airing his troops for two months on the Spanish frontier, had put them up again during the summer heats. He begged the English commander to lend him two regiments of dragoons, who were useless in their present state as nearly all their horses had perished; and this augmentation to his forces he obtained on the condition that he should find the means to remount the regiments. Peterborough, with his usual contempt for economy when intent upon some adventurous scheme, at once repaired to the Jewish money-lenders of Lisbon, and borrowed upon his own responsibility enough to provide horses for the whole troop.† But an event now occurred which led to his making a change in his first plans. Darmstadt, hearing that Peterborough was expected at Lisbon, had hastened thither from Gibraltar, full of his old project of effecting a landing in Catalonia and laying siege to Barcelona. The two men, somewhat resembling each other as they did in their passion for

* The best idea of Peterborough is to be gathered from Swift's works. E. Warburton has written a memoir of the Earl in two vols., 1853.

† He drew bills on the English treasury at a heavy rate of discount, a proceeding which very naturally gave umbrage to Godolphin. The Earl frequently repeated this conduct. It was excusable in so far that the Ministers, who were straining every nerve to keep Marlborough well supplied, begrudged the commonest necessaries to the forces in the Peninsula.

hazardous and romantic enterprises, did not, however, at first agree.* The reception which the Allies had met with three years before in Andalusia had very naturally spread among Englishmen considerable distrust in the statements which were still being made that the Spaniards were ripe for rebellion. That a considerable party did actually exist in the province of Catalonia favourable to the cause of King Charles, was indeed evident from the arrests and executions which were daily taking place.† But even Darmstadt was forced to allow that the fortifications of Barcelona were in good order, that the garrison could not be less than four thousand men, that there was little hope that either the garrison or the authorities of the city could be tampered with, and that a French army under Berwick was near the Pyrenees ready to descend into Spain if required. The consideration of all these circumstances disposed even Peterborough to think that the chances of capturing the city were too small to justify him in wasting the time of the expedition in attempts upon it. But there was one great person upon whom Darmstadt's eloquence was not exerted in vain. Charles had grown weary of Portugal, and desperate of being borne in triumph into Spain by armies commanded by such generals as Schomberg or Galway. He entered warmly into the Prince's project. He entreated and commanded Peterborough to try and execute it; and the Earl, not wishing to thwart the very monarch in vindication of whose rights the war had been instituted, at length gave a reluctant consent to do his best. Charles, eager for a change of scene, thereupon came to a resolution of going himself with the expedition. He requested Peterborough to take him on board his ship, a request which the Earl not only granted, but with an impulsive generosity which seems to have half ruined him, undertook to defray from his own resources the expense of maintaining the monarch and his suite in regal style throughout the voyage.‡

The expedition late in July resumed its course, joined by arrangement the squadron of Shovel off Tangier, and the whole party proceeded to Gibraltar, where an advantageous exchange

* Dr. Freind, Account of the Conduct of the Earl of Peterborough in Spain, 1708.

† Lettres Historiques.

‡ Dr. Freind, Account of the Conduct.

was made of some of the ill-trained recruits on board for two regiments of the hardy veterans who had fought their way into the town, and had since defended it against the assaults of Villadarias. After leaving Gibraltar, the fleet put in to water at Altea Bay, about twenty miles north of Alicante, and Peterborough seized the opportunity to distribute some copies of a manifesto in the name of the Allied powers. It was so well received, and the people were in appearance so friendly that a conception flashed across the mind of the commander. Between the coast and Madrid there was not a single battalion of soldiers nor one solitary fortified town. The drain of troops towards Gibraltar, Portugal and Barcelona had left the interior of Spain quite destitute of defenders. Madrid itself was without a garrison except Philip's body-guard. What was there then to oppose an invader if, first making the easy capture of Valencia to secure his communications with the sea, he struck boldly into the interior, and made for the capital? This plan was surely more likely to be attended with success than the difficult and hazardous one of laying siege to Barcelona; and if it actually proved successful the war would be concluded. The Allies would attain in this simple manner the very object for which they had been contending during four years in half the countries of Europe. Charles would take his seat on the throne of Spain. Philip would be compelled to return into France.*

The scheme, however, brilliant and attractive as it was, did not meet with the approval of Charles and his German counsellors. The only argument against it which transpired was, that more money would be required for its execution than the English commander possessed.† The probability is that Darmstadt was too fond of his own project to think highly of the projects of any other man. Peterborough therefore consented to make the attempt upon Barcelona; but stipulated that if at the end of eighteen days after the landing, no impression should have been made upon the city, the troops should be re-embarked and the scheme abandoned.

Upon the 22nd of August the fleet approached Barcelona, and upon the following day Darmstadt, who had sailed in advance

* Boyer; Freind. † Boyer.

with two frigates, returned with what he considered great intelligence. The inhabitants of Vich, a town about thirty miles inland, had revolted, and were marching down to the coast to join the Allies. A number of half-armed men were soon afterwards discerned straggling along the shore, but bearing no resemblance to an organized force. All Peterborough's doubts and anxieties returned. He summoned a council of war, and found that the great majority of his officers were of opinion that, with an army of not more than seven thousand men, to attack a city so large, so well fortified, and so amply garrisoned as Barcelona, was nothing better than to waste time and life. The Dutch admiral, for his part, flatly refused to permit any men in the employ of the States over whom he had power, to join in the enterprise. Yet Peterborough, after a little consideration, nevertheless decided to put the troops on shore. He seems to have feared that, unless he proved the folly of the scheme by actual experiment, he might be afterwards reproached with cowardice or remissness. The infantry were accordingly rowed through a rather dangerous surf to a point about a mile and a half north-east of the city, and landed amid the applause of a half-starved and most ill-looking rabble. The dragoons and the artillery followed, without meeting with any impediment from an enemy, although the disembarkation occupied nearly a week, an immunity which was imputed to the circumstance that the rebels had, in the indulgence of their instinct for plunder, got possession of most of the convents and villas lying between the city and the place of landing. Charles himself was among the last to leave the ships. He disembarked under a salute of cannon from the fleet, and was welcomed to the shore by a crowd that seemed to have gone mad with delight. Many persons threw themselves upon their knees at the water's edge; others pressed near him in the hope of kissing his hand. At length he broke loose from his worshippers, and rode to the camp.*

The fortifications of Barcelona, although ancient and sharing in the general decay of everything belonging to the Spanish

* Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Freind; Lord Mahon's History; Warburton's Memoir. I have made but little use of the Memoirs of Captain Carleton. This was the composition of Defoe, and it is impossible to say how far it was founded on authentic testimony.

monarchy, had been repaired since the breaking out of the war, and were now quite strong enough to withstand the inferior artillery which the Allies could bring to bear upon them. The garrison, moreover, were almost as numerous as the assailants; for the revolters, with all their enthusiasm for Charles, had the true Spanish dislike for regular work, and declined to assist in any laborious siege operations. A fortnight passed away, and the English made but slow progress with their trenches. Another council of war was called on the 8th of September, and this time the officers were unanimously of opinion that it was idle to waste further time upon the undertaking, and that sail ought to be made at once for the Italian coast, where they might render real service to the cause. Peterborough professed himself satisfied, appended his name to the resolution subscribed by the others, and issued orders for re-embarking the troops. The baggage and artillery were sent again on board, much to the relief of the authorities of the besieged city, who, shut up with a population of rather doubtful fidelity, had experienced an uneasy time while the trenches were being formed. Charles and his counsellors were mad with vexation. The disappointed sovereign strove hard to influence the officers. He had, he said, certain intelligence that the city would be betrayed to him in a few days. He could not in honour abandon the Catalans, who, at the risk of their lives, had taken up arms in his behalf. Darmstadt had been for some time on such cool terms with Peterborough as to make it probable that the two would take the first convenient opportunity for settling their differences with their swords. Yet the Earl, in spite of all the remonstrances and threats of the Germans, coolly continued to superintend the re-embarkation of the soldiers. He was, in truth, meditating a plan which, with more prudence than he usually showed, he had determined to impart to no person until the moment came for carrying it into execution. On the western side of Barcelona, the hill of Monjuich rears itself above the city to a height of seven hundred feet. This commanding position, which, in fact, places the city at the mercy of the possessor, was then surmounted by a castle, and had been recently fortified by a series of walls extending down the hill. These fortifications Peterborough had quietly reconnoitred, and

had found to be but negligently guarded, the main strength of the garrison being drawn away to the opposite side of the city, which faced the camp of the Allies. He chose the night of the 13th of September for making his attempt. On the evening of that day he began his march, with twelve hundred foot and two hundred horse, by a path which, after winding for a long distance among the neighbouring hills, brought him, about two hours before daybreak, within a quarter of a mile of the lowest enclosure of Monjuich. Here he gave the command to halt, not a little to the surprise of his officers, who having by this time surmised his object, had imagined that he would take advantage of the darkness. The Earl then imparted his plan. Their only chance, he explained, was to wait until morning. The customary guard would then pass through the gate of the enclosure, and descend into the ditch before it. Then would be the moment for a select party to reveal itself, to receive the fire of the astonished guard, to close with their opponents, and to hurry after them into the enclosure. Thirty brave fellows were selected for this duty, while the rest of the force was disposed in situations to sustain them in case of success. Everything turned out according to the expectations of Peterborough. The guard appeared in the ditch, was struck with dismay at the apparition of an enemy, fired their muskets at random, and fled back into the enclosure with their assailants at their heels. In a few minutes the lower fortifications of Monjuich were in the possession of the English. A quantity of large stones lay in one corner intended for the repairs of the walls, and these were soon converted into a breastwork for shelter against the fire that was expected from the castle.*

Meanwhile, the Viceroy of Catalonia, having been aroused by the sound of firing in the direction of Monjuich, had despatched several squadrons of dragoons to the assistance of the garrison. These men now appeared on the battlements of the inner fortifications, waving their hats and shouting, "*Viva el Rey!*" Unfortunately, Darmstadt interpreted these gesticulations, which were doubtless intended to express defiance, as signs

* I have compiled this narrative from all the previously quoted authorities, and from Burnet, who received his information from General Stanhope, who was with the forces.

that the garrison wished to surrender. He advanced from cover with three hundred men, the enemy made a sally in force, and inflicted considerable loss on the little band. As the Prince was retreating Peterborough came up, and a few words were exchanged between the two. While they were conversing, two shots in quick succession struck the former, and laid him dead at the Englishman's feet. His untimely fate was very generally lamented. His vigour and enthusiasm, however misdirected the qualities might sometimes be, the courage he had displayed in the defence of Gibraltar, had acquired the respect of the soldiery, and made him very popular in England. There were not wanting persons who attributed to him, and not to Peterborough, the first conception of the design upon Monjuich.

It was now reported to the Earl, that a large reinforcement of cavalry and infantry was making its way from the city towards the hill. He left his men securely posted, and went to some distance for the purpose of reconnoitring. Scarcely was his back turned when the soldiers were seized with a panic. To get possession of the castle still seemed to be a hopeless undertaking, and if they stayed longer where they were the whole garrison of Barcelona would be upon them. The instinct of self-preservation soon became irresistible. Lord Charlemont, who had been left in charge, was prevailed upon to give the necessary orders, and the whole troop was soon in rapid retreat down the hill. They had not, however, gone far before they encountered their indignant commander, who, having been apprised of what was passing, had returned at full gallop. He snatched a pike from Charlemont's hands, and shouted his orders to face about. The sight of his well-remembered figure, the sound of his voice, acted like a charm. The men followed him with renewed confidence back to the enclosure, and, fortunately, in time to recover all that they had abandoned.

Intelligence of the success was rapidly conveyed to the fleet. The artillery was again brought on shore, and set to play upon the inner fortifications of Monjuich. The reduction of the castle was quickened by the falling of a shell into the powder-magazine, which exploded it. The Spanish rebels, who had

seconded the English with great alacrity from the moment that fortune seemed to be turning in their favour, rushed in, and would have indulged in a miscellaneous massacre of their countrymen, but for the prompt and vigorous intervention of Peterborough. The siege of Barcelona was now continued with a spirit that had been wanting before. Batteries were erected, and cannon dragged into all sorts of impossible positions. Companies of sailors landed each morning from the fleet, and emulated the zeal of the soldiers in serving the guns. By the 3rd of October a considerable breach had been made in the walls, and Peterborough sent the Viceroy a summons to surrender. Don Velasco, however, although surrounded by traitors who were thirsting for his blood, proved himself worthy of the trust which had been reposed in him. Further defence of the city was indeed useless, yet he would consent to nothing more than that Barcelona should be surrendered in four days, unless in the meantime succour reached him from the outside. For this period Peterborough was content to wait. But on the following morning the whole city was in an uproar. The English from their elevated position could see that the populace had risen, that bands of ferocious men were parading the streets and attacking the houses of obnoxious individuals. At times furious shouts proclaimed that the principal object of vengeance was the inflexible Viceroy. In the interests of humanity, Peterborough descended almost alone, and demanded admittance at the gate of the city, which was at once thrown open to him. Scarcely had he entered when a young and beautiful woman besought his protection from the rabble. She proved to be the wife of the Duke of Popoli, a nobleman distinguished for his loyalty to Philip. Having escorted her to a place of safety, he proceeded in quest of the Viceroy, who had taken refuge in a convent from the mob which had burned down his palace. Velasco entreated the Earl to save his life by sending him on board the fleet, and the petition was granted. To the garrison had already been accorded honourable terms. The English had agreed to convey them by sea to Malaga; but such seems to have been the revulsion of feeling which had come over the troops in this part of Spain, that four-fifths of the defenders of Barcelona preferred

to remain where they were and to take service under King Charles.*

This singularly felicitous conquest was followed by numerous popular insurrections, which, in a few days, gained to the allegiance of the Austrian sovereign not only the entire province of Catalonia, with but the exception of two or three unimportant fortresses, but also several towns belonging to the neighbouring provinces of Aragon and Valencia. Charles made his public entry into Barcelona a few days after the surrender of the city, and was solemnly proclaimed King of Spain. His manners, grave, dignified, and punctilious, fully satisfied the ideal of his subjects. His religion, moreover, was found to be up to the high standard of Spanish orthodoxy. The moment he caught sight of the host he darted from his coach to throw himself upon his knees in the mud; and this manifestation of reverence won for him not only the hearts of the populace, but of a class without whose aid it would have been useless to entertain the ambition of reigning in Spain—the priesthood. So favourably did the ecclesiastics of Catalonia conceive of Charles, as to vote him in their rapture a small sum of money.†

Upon the Governments of France and Spain the news of the astounding success of the Allies fell like a thunderbolt. The siege of Gibraltar, which had become hopeless, was forthwith raised, and Tessé was directed to march into Aragon. At the mere rumour of the approach of the French dragoons the populations of entire districts took wing, and fled into the towns or up the mountains. Twenty years had elapsed since the barbarities of those regiments in the south of France had filled all Europe with strange and horrible tales; but in the retentive mind of the simple Spaniard a French dragoon was still a species of demon who murdered children and feasted upon their bodies. Helpless old women, the only occupants of villages, fell upon their knees at the sight of this dreadful monster, and besought him to be content with their little store of wine and

* The Lettres Historiques and Lamberty give the letters of the Dutch Admiral to the States-general and Charles's letter to the Queen. Peterborough to his wife, October 6—17, given in Coxe; Boyer. I have made use of Lord Mahon's History. Inasmuch as his lordship is in possession of a number of his ancestor Stanhope's letters his account should be authoritative. Mariana says that Peterborough entered not through the gate but through the breach.

† San Felipe, Commentarios; Lettres Historiques.

food, and to spare their lives.* Such was the reputation which a Christian king, endowed with unusual opportunities of acquiring the love and esteem of mankind, had, after a reign of unexampled length, contrived to inspire by means of his myrmidons in the population of a neighbouring country.

The manœuvres of Galway upon the Portuguese frontier during this year scarcely deserve recording. The united English, Dutch, and Portuguese armies, after recapturing a few petty towns taken in the previous campaign by Berwick, wound up the season by a feeble and futile attempt upon Badajoz, in conducting which the English commander lost an arm. He retired for a while from the army, leaving the command to the Dutch general, Fagel. The close of the year found the Allies in this quarter absolutely without an enemy to fight, the French and Spanish troops having been diverted towards Catalonia.

In Germany an event, which seemed to bode well for the future prosperity of the Allies, had occurred during the year. The Emperor Leopold, whose feeble mind, sickly constitution, and recluse habits fitted him rather to be the abbot of a quiet monastery than the head of a great military power, had passed away, and a young, energetic, and warlike prince had succeeded to his dignities. Joseph had, while King of the Romans, taken a keen interest in military affairs, and had manifested for the two most famous captains of the age a degree of reverential affection which made men augur that the Empire, so long wasted by the sloth and folly of its rulers, was about to enter upon a fresh term of life and vigour. His understanding, when compared at least with that of several generations of his predecessors, was remarkably broad, clear, and strong; and he was by no means inclined to submit his good natural talents to the guidance of the priesthood. He was indeed strongly averse to religious persecution. One of his first actions was to administer a severe rebuke to a zealous ecclesiastic, who took occasion in a sermon preached before the court to exhort the new sovereign to persevere in the pious work of exterminating heresy from

* Lettres Historiques (for January, 1706); Mémoires de Tessé. But the Spanish peasantry are prone to attribute fantastic wickedness to foreigners. A few years ago an English engineer was attacked and nearly murdered in a rural district, the population being possessed by a notion that his business consisted in boiling down babies to grease telegraph wires with their fat.

his dominions.* He at once set himself diligently to the task of increasing the Imperial revenues, the sources of which had been nearly dried up by the lamentable bigotry of three successive emperors. Several sweeping but most salutary changes were made in the administration. The Privy Council, which had consisted of a hundred and thirty heads, was, in spite of Solomon's commendation of a multitude of counsellors, pared down to twenty-seven well-selected advisers. The Council of the chamber was reduced from seventy-two to eighteen persons, and the Aulic Council, which, since its establishment by Maximilian, had gradually become the supreme judicial court of the Empire, was reformed, and its administration of justice tempered by the introduction of Protestant members.† The difficulties, however, with which Joseph had to contend at his advent to the throne, were such as no genius for statecraft could at once overcome. Generals from all sides were importuning him for troops, to subdue the restless and exasperated rebels in Hungary, to rescue the unfortunate Duke of Savoy from the grasp of the French armies, to co-operate in the grand scheme of invading France from the side of the Moselle; and the state of the Imperial treasury rendered it impossible for him to comply with all these demands. The consequence of his unavoidable shortcomings was a cry all round Europe that sloth and dissimulation were vices inherent in every emperor, and that it was useless to place any further dependence upon princes who never performed their engagements. The people of England and Holland were indignant at the abandonment of Marlborough; the Duke of Savoy indulged in bitter reflections upon the ally who could so cruelly leave him exposed to the fury of the French monarch and his marshals.

To insure, if possible, better results for the campaign of 1706 than he had been able to accomplish during the year that was closing, Joseph sent Marlborough a pressing invitation to repair to him at Vienna, and this invitation the English commander, after consulting Godolphin and Heinsius, decided to accept. Towards the close of October he quitted the army, and proceeded by rapid stages through Frankfort and Ratisbon. He was sumptuously entertained along the road by the various

* Lettres Historiques. † Lettres Historiques.

princes through whose territories he passed. At Frankfort he received a visit from Prince Louis, who welcomed the coadjutor he had so capriciously betrayed not six months before with a sublime unconsciousness of having been to blame in the matter. A request had since been cautiously made by the English to the Imperial Government that the Prince should be superseded;* but the answer had been that his influence was far too great with some important circles of the Empire to render any slight put upon him a politic measure.

At Vienna Marlborough found the Emperor and his Ministers willing enough to promote the general interests of the Alliance, but in a state of utter helplessness through their want of means. The first necessity was to remit money to Eugene, who wrote that his magazines were exhausted and his troops starving. The Viennese bankers would supply nothing upon Imperial credit, and Marlborough was forced to pledge that of the Queen and the States-general for the repayment of a hundred thousand crowns, which were thereupon despatched to the Prince.†

During the ten days of his residence at the capital the patents were made out which constituted him a Prince of the Empire, and transferred to him the newly-erected principality of Mindelheim. The dignity had been offered to him eighteen months previously during his march to the Danube, and the offer had been renewed after his victories; but there had been difficulty in finding a suitable territory upon which to impose the princely title. The lordship of Mindelheim was a portion of Bavaria situated between Augsburg and Memmingen. It had been settled upon the Dowager Electress of Bavaria as a part of her dowry, but had been confiscated by Leopold after the defection of the reigning Elector. Its possessor ruled in sovereign state over dominions six leagues in length by four in breadth, inhabited by some fifteen hundred subjects. Magistrates appointed by the sovereign dispensed the laws; a burgomaster, assisted by a common council, regulated the affairs of the town; four ministers relieved their liege of the cares of royalty; and a grand bailiff, who acted as chancellor of the

* Through Lord Sunderland, who was now on a mission to the Court of Vienna. Coxe's Memoirs; Burnet.

† Coxe's Memoirs. The Duke promised also to use his influence in procuring for the Emperor a loan of £250,000 on a mortgage of some mines in Silesia.

exchequer, managed the revenues. The expenses of administration were, however, less than might be supposed. They did not exceed four hundred and fifty pounds a year, and left the sovereign a balance of fifteen hundred.*

From Vienna Marlborough travelled in seven days to Berlin. Frederick was in a state of exasperation, and threatening to recall his troops from the service of the Allied Powers. The Dutch, it seems, were unpunctual in their payments to him, and the Emperor, who was chargeable for some Prussian regiments, never made any payments at all. But the visitor's skill as a peacemaker was irresistible. The irascible monarch gradually calmed down under the influence of soft words and specious promises, though at times a burst of spitefulness would show that the volcano was rather smothered than extinguished. He was at length so far brought back to good-humour as to consent not to ruin the Duke of Savoy and the cause of the Allies in Italy by withdrawing the eight thousand men who were serving under Eugene. But as to the troops he had loaned to the States, and to whom he had actually sent orders of recall, he would make no promises, and broke out into such a spluttering of rage at the bare mention of the impudent traders who had presumed, as he imagined, to treat him, a crowned head, with disrespect, that the Duke thought it prudent to allow a little time to pass over before broaching the subject again.†

In returning to the Hague, Marlborough passed through Hanover, and seized the occasion to pay court to the heirs-presumptive to the English crown. To his infinite disgust he found this quiet little place disturbed by party feeling, and its politicians divided into Whig and Tory factions. The Dowager Electress Sophia had Tory sympathies, and kept up a correspondence with some of the Tory leaders in England. The Elector George, whose tastes were rather warlike, was a zealous Whig, and the consequence of this difference of opinion was a coolness between mother and son.‡

* Coxe, who gives a letter of Stepney to the Duke, May 30, 1706, about the ceremony of taking possession of the principality.

† Coxe's Memoirs; Lettres Historiques.

‡ The Tories were at this time moving in Parliament to invite the Electress over to England. The sympathies of Sophia for this party seem never to have been entirely alienated, notwithstanding all the efforts which the Whigs made to blacken them in her eyes.

There yet remained much business to transact at the Hague before Marlborough could return to his home. The position of Eugene was critical in the extreme. Unless, he wrote word, a further reinforcement of ten thousand men and money to the extent of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds were immediately furnished to him, he would have no resource but to abandon the Duke of Savoy to his fate, and to lead his men to countries where they ran less danger of perishing by famine or being overwhelmed by superior numbers than in Italy. How to procure this necessary assistance for the Prince was a problem of no easy solution. The English Commons would probably make no objection to allowing some additional money for the support of the war in this quarter, but then they would be certain to stipulate that the States should contribute their accustomed proportion of one-third, and the consent of the States to undertake any further burdens it seemed hopeless to obtain. They were already in arrears both for the pay of the Prussian auxiliaries, and for their share in the expenses of the armament which, it had been agreed, should be maintained in Catalonia. To all applications for money the Dutch statesmen had but one answer to make. The Republic was already labouring under a load of taxation greater than it could support. The people could afford no more, and the consequence of any pressure upon them might be to give to that active minority, which had been throughout adverse to the war, a fatal preponderance in the government.* How far this plea of poverty was justified by facts it was not easy to ascertain. That the general prosperity of the nation had been greatly affected by the cessation of all open traffic with France might be taken for granted. But however the facts might be, it was certain that no Englishman would listen to the plea with any patience. The cry in this country would be that Holland was intent only upon her own interests, and was determined to shirk any burdens imposed upon her for the general cause of the Allies. She was willing enough to co-operate with our soldiers in winning towns in the Netherlands which she expected to govern hereafter; but the moment some scheme was proposed, the advantage of which would be more directly to the Emperor or

* Numerous letters of Marlborough scattered through Coxe's Memoirs.

the King of Spain, or the Duke of Savoy, then came all this whining about her distressed condition.

It was not without great difficulty that the States were at length induced to take upon themselves a third part of the cost of sending ten thousand men to reinforce the army of Eugene. The two hundred and fifty thousand pounds required by the Prince was raised without difficulty in London at eight per cent interest. The security offered by the Emperor was certain quicksilver mines in Silesia, and the loan was further guaranteed by the city of Breslau.*

On the last day of the year Marlborough, after an absence of nine months, again set foot in England. The conqueror was attended in his voyage from the Hague by a selection of the most distinguished French and Bavarian officers who had been made prisoners during the campaign, and could display thirty-six standards and colours as trophies of his skill and the valour of his soldiers. A deputation from the Commons soon afterwards waited upon him to express the thanks of the House for his great services both as a general and a diplomatist. His reply to this compliment requires some explanation. A month or two before his return to England a clergyman named Stevens, the rector of Sutton in Surrey, had been foolish enough to publish some saucy remarks about the character and conduct of the Commander-in-Chief and the new Secretary, Harley. A statesman of the present age, accustomed every day to the censures of a free press, would endure an attack of this kind with complacency. But for the press Marlborough entertained a terror resembling that which Mephistopheles, who could not be dismayed by the swords and guns of his adversaries, displayed at the sight of a cross. A printed libel, no matter how obscure was the writer, how absurd his arguments, or how spiritless his language, never failed to make the illustrious general wretched, indeed to unman him completely. All the honours which had been heaped upon him by the princes and crowned heads of Europe, the acclamations with which his countrymen had, as usual, greeted him upon his return home, could not, it seems, obliterate from his memory the wicked insinuations of this one poor parson. He now in effect told the

* Boyer; Lettres Historiques.

Commons that their approval of his conduct consoled him for the reflections which had been cast upon him by private malice. It might appear, therefore, that in his mind the honour of being thanked by the whole nation through its representative body was no more than a compensation for the agonies he had suffered through the criticism of one miserable pamphleteer.*

But what punishment could be too severe for the criminal who had caused all this trouble? The gentle Anne was moved to unwonted wrath by this attack upon her favourite. Stevens was prosecuted by the Attorney-General, was convicted of having published a libel, was condemned to pay a fine of one hundred marks, and to stand twice in the pillory. The poor wretch fell on his knees, and begged for mercy. Marlborough had by this time returned to the Continent. Stevens wrote, however, to the Duchess a piteous letter, entreating her, for the sake of his wife and six children, to intercede and save him from public disgrace. Notwithstanding the libel he had published, God knew his heart, that he never bore the least ill-will to his Grace in all his life. The great lady was satisfied, and at her request Anne very reluctantly remitted the punishment of the pillory. The great man also was mollified, and inclined to the side of clemency. "I should have been very uneasy," he wrote, "if the law had not found Stevens guilty, but much more uneasy if he had suffered the punishment on my account." †

Scotland had been, as usual, Godolphin's principal source of anxiety throughout the year. How to please a people that seemed obstinately determined not to be conciliated, and how to form a ministry with the necessary amount of influence in a country where the factions appeared to vary in strength every year, were enigmas that it seemed impossible to solve. To hit upon the right man and the right faction to support with the royal favour was the most earnest wish of the English statesman; but year after year his experiments had failed. The nobleman and faction who appeared, while in opposition, to carry everything before them, became, when placed in power,

* Poor Stevens's libel was entitled "A Letter to the Author of the Memorial of the Church of England." He had the folly and audacity to criticise the military conduct of the Duke. Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Luttrell's Diary.

† Marlborough to the Duchess, May 20—31. Stevens's letter is printed in Boyer's Annals.

as impotent, as incapable of managing the Estates, as the nobleman and faction they succeeded. Each party, except that of the notorious Jacobites, had been proved in turn. Queensberry, the chief of the Revolutioners, had been thought the person most generally popular in Scotland until he had appeared in the throne. The promotion of Tweeddale, the head of the moderate party, had been then considered likely to gratify the majority of the Parliament; but the moment he became Commissioner his influence seemed to desert him. It had been in vain that Godolphin, in his eagerness to propitiate the Scotch, had put words into the mouth of his royal mistress scarcely becoming the dignity of a great and powerful queen. All the protestations Anne could make of her willingness to consent to anything in reason that could be desired of her, all her professions that she was no dissembler, that she really meant what she said, produced no effect upon these stubborn subjects. As a last resource the English Minister had counselled her Majesty to concede that Act of Security which the Estates seemed so determined to have; yet no sooner was it passed than the direst consequences appeared likely to ensue. Scotland, now authorised by law to arm and train her population, was eagerly availing herself of the permission. The English, as a matter of precaution, were repairing the walls of their border towns, and augmenting the militia in the northern counties.* The Jacobites, whose main hope rested in a breach between the two kingdoms, were in high glee; and while affairs seemed tending from bad to worse, a most unlucky incident occurred of a character well calculated to inflame the irritation prevailing between the two nations.

Some time in the commencement of 1705, an English ship named the *Worcester*, returning from the East Indies, was driven northward by stress of weather, and took shelter in the Firth of Forth. The Scottish Admiralty, then burning with resentment against the English Government, showed anything rather than hospitality to the crew thus thrown upon their protection. A year or two back the East India Company had seized a ship belonging to the Scottish African Company while

* Berwick, Carlisle, and Newcastle were placed in a posture of defence; Lettres Historiques.

lading in the Thames on the pretext that a violation of their charter was intended. The Scottish Admiralty had protested and expostulated with the Government, but no redress had they hitherto been able to obtain for the owners of the vessel. They now determined to confiscate, by way of reprisal, the English ship which had fallen into their hands. The *Worcester* was accordingly brought up to Burntisland, and the crew were set on shore. One of the men thus dispossessed was a negro, who, having very likely been ill-treated during the voyage, cherished a grudge against his shipmates. He went to the authorities of the town and told a strange tale. While in the Indian seas, he deposed, the *Worcester* had attacked a small Scotch ship called the *Happy Return*, and, after pillaging, had sent her to the bottom with all her crew on board. The captain, whose name was Green, and his thirteen sailors, were immediately arrested. The negro persisted in his statement, and witnesses came forward who deposed to having heard some of the men, when in their cups, drop words which seemed to corroborate the story. Upon evidence of this kind a Scottish jury found the prisoners guilty of piracy and murder; and Green and two others, who were regarded as ringleaders, were sentenced to be hanged. But while the examinations were being conducted in Edinburgh, a very different version of the facts was being laid before the Privy Council in London. Two men had presented themselves before the Lord Mayor, and deposed that they belonged to the missing ship, that the *Happy Return* had been seized and carried off by a part of her crew, while the captain and the rest of the sailors were on shore in Madagascar, and that they themselves had managed to escape to the Mauritius, where they found means of returning to England. If this evidence were true, the probability was that the crew of the *Happy Return* had hoisted the black flag, and were now marauding somewhere on the Indian Ocean. The story was, at all events, as much entitled to credit as that of the negro. Orders were consequently sent down to Edinburgh to postpone the execution of the sentence.

The case had excited the most intense interest in the Scottish capital. One of the fiercest rabbles in Europe was impatiently expecting the day of execution. When the rumour circulated that a reprieve had come down from London, there was a

terrific uproar. The populace was too completely blinded by national passions to doubt of the guilt of the English sailors. The interference, therefore, of the Government was ascribed to nothing else than the love of meddling in Scottish affairs, and of heaping insults on the dignity and independence of the kingdom. A great crowd surrounded the Tolbooth and filled the Parliament close, clamouring for the execution of the unhappy men. The Chancellor's coach was stopped, and that functionary narrowly escaped with his life. The Council was fairly intimidated, and decided to set aside the orders of the Queen. Green and the two others were brought forth from the Tolbooth, were hooted by the rabble all the way to Leith for pirates, murderers, and English dogs, and were duly hanged, in accordance with their sentence, on the borders of the sea. To the last they protested their innocence of the crimes for which they suffered.*

In England the violence and injustice of the Scottish rabble, and the weakness shown by the Scottish ministers, naturally excited strong indignation. Accounts of the tragical fate of Green and his comrades were hawked about the streets of London. The epithet of English dogs, which had been applied to them on their last sad journey, was not omitted by the fraternity of Grub Street. The speeches in which they asseverated their innocence, and appealed from their murderers to the judgment of an impartial tribunal, drew tears from the eyes of every housemaid. The Scotch had never been popular in the capital, and for several weeks succeeding this affair the irritation against them was so great, that a native of the northern kingdom was compelled to be very circumspect in his conduct, for a trifling provocation would certainly have brought upon him an infuriated mob.

The matter was not, however, made the subject of a Parliamentary inquiry. A warm debate appears to have been held in the English Privy Council, but no resolution was passed. The wish of Godolphin undoubtedly was that, in view of the critical position in which the two kingdoms now stood towards each other, as little should be said about the affair as possible. Three months after the unfortunate men had been sacrificed to

* Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Wright's History of Scotland.

popular fury, the Estates of Scotland reassembled. The Government had been again remodelled. The failure of Tweeddale and his friends had been so complete, that it was thought expedient to turn them out. The old Revolution party was now reinstated in office very nearly as it had been at the Queen's accession. Queensberry, however, had lost so much of his popularity, that, at his own request, he was passed over for Commissioner. The person selected to represent her Majesty was the Duke of Argyle.

Argyle had succeeded not two years since to the array of titles and the immense domains which the gratitude of William had restored with splendid additions to the House of Campbell. Both in point of influence and of wealth he might fairly be regarded as the first nobleman of Scotland. Towards the Presbyterian party he stood in the light of an hereditary chief, and the Presbyterian party meant little less than the whole Scottish nation. Within his own vast territories the power of Mac Callum More was virtually without limit. It was said that he could bring eight thousand men into the field. His natural abilities would have insured respect even in a private station, and shone with great lustre in the conspicuous position he filled. He was alike distinguished for the courage he displayed as a soldier, and for the grace and facility with which he could address a senate. He possessed indeed both the virtues and what are often the failings of an ardent and chivalric nature. His enemies, the Jacobites, while admitting that he was incapable of meanness or dissimulation, and that his word was kept so sacredly that it could always be depended upon, accused him of being too impetuous, too positive in his opinions, and prone to act without sufficient reflection; and many incidents in his subsequent career, which extended far into the reign of George II., proved that this reproach was well founded.* At this period, his politics were those of the Revolution party. He was a zealous supporter of the Hanoverian succession, and was convinced that an union with England was necessary to the peace and prosperity of Scotland. Such was the nobleman, then only in his twenty-seventh year, who, in July, opened the session of 1705.

* See the character Lockhart gives of him.

Two subjects were earnestly recommended in the Queen's letter to the consideration of the Estates,—the settlement of the succession in the Protestant line, and that an Act should be passed to authorise the nomination of commissioners to negotiate an union between the two kingdoms with commissioners appointed on behalf of England.

With but one exception, that of Lord Annandale, the Ministers concurred in thinking that, notwithstanding the subject of the settlement was the first mentioned in the royal letter, it would be advisable to postpone bringing it forward until the Act for nominating commissioners had been obtained. It was indeed most questionable whether it would be prudent to introduce the measure at all. Nothing had been more clearly proved by the experience of the last two sessions than that the settlement of the crown was, in the present state of feeling towards England, a subject almost equally odious to all parties, —Presbyterians and Episcopalians, Cavaliers and Revolutioners. Its introduction would be certain to unite against the Ministers two-thirds of the Parliament, and the session would again be consumed in quarrelling, manœuvring and compromising. On the other hand, it was not improbable that the Act for the commissioners might be obtained with little difficulty. It was tolerably evident that to nine Scotchmen out of ten no event seemed less likely to happen than that the two sets of commissioners, even if appointed, would ever be able to agree about terms for an union. Who, then, would be at the trouble of opposing an Act which, when carried, he felt convinced, would remain a dead letter? It could be worth no one's while, however little the project of an union might harmonise with his opinions or his interests, to thwart her Majesty in a wish which she appeared to have so much at heart, and which could be gratified with so little risk of consequences.

Annandale was, however, determined to proceed in his own method, and his perverse folly occasioned the loss of several weeks. His proposal to settle the succession aroused, as had been anticipated, an overpowering opposition. It was met by a resolution to give precedence to the consideration of the trade and coin of the nation.* Two remarkable men seized this

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Boyer; Lettres Historiques.

occasion to bring under the notice of Parliament certain schemes upon which their imaginations had been feeding from boyhood, schemes which should remove for ever from Scotland the curse of poverty and convert the kingdom into a paradise of wealth and luxury. The older of the two men was the already well-known Doctor Hugh Chamberlayne. This financial genius, after the failure in 1696 of his plan of enriching England by the establishment of a land bank, had been compelled to fly from his creditors, and had since lived in Scotland, impoverished in means but rich in expectations, amusing his abundant leisure with writing treatises upon his hobby, and paying assiduous court to the Ministers through whose favour he still hoped to become the manager of an institution whose riches should throw into the shade the stupid collections of gold and silver in the banks of Venice and Amsterdam. Chamberlayne's scheme of a bank that was to issue to every proprietor of land notes to one hundred times the land's annual value, and which should have a forced circulation, had been investigated by the English Commons in a spirit highly favourable to the projector. It had eventually been abandoned merely because most persons, even those whose judgments had at first been dazzled by the promises of wealth held out to them by the enthusiast, became at length convinced of its absurdity. But the Doctor himself still clung to his delusion, and in another country had soon gathered around him a fresh circle of dupes. Indeed the fact that his scheme had been rejected by the English Parliament was rather a recommendation of it than otherwise to Scotchmen. What he now proposed was to establish a bank with the power to issue notes to an extent limited only by the aggregate value of all the estates in Scotland.* His views as to the value of land he had now, it seems, somewhat modified. Out of deference, perhaps, to the incorrigible stupidity of mankind, he was content to compute it, not at one hundred times, but at only forty-five times its annual value. Each possessor of land might therefore claim from the bank notes to the amount of forty-five times the income which he derived from his land; and these notes he might exchange for coin, and either lend out the latter

* His proposal was read and ordered to be printed; Boyer. Chamberlen's proposal for establishing a land credit in this kingdom, Edinburgh, 1700.

at interest or employ it in trade. His estate he was to retain; but was to engage to refund the amount expressed on the notes by annual payments of two and a quarter per cent. Thus, for instance, the owner of an estate worth a hundred pounds a year might at once realise four thousand five hundred pounds, upon his simply covenanting to repay to the bank a hundred pounds a year for the term of forty-five years. There was one objection to this scheme which forced itself upon the mind of every person who had the least glimmering of sense. Who would give money in exchange for these notes? Their possessor could neither claim payment in gold nor a commensurate estate in land. He was simply entitled to claim two and a quarter per cent. of the amount expressed on the face of them during a term of years. A capitalist would thus find that he had parted with his money, a tradesman with his goods, without the prospect of being reimbursed, except in driblets extending probably beyond his lifetime. But this difficulty Chamberlayne thought he completely overcame by making his notes legal tender by Act of Parliament. He was so foolish as to imagine that Parliament had only to place upon any substance the value it pleased, and that that value it would forthwith assume in the eyes of the nation. So omnipotent did he consider Government that, if it chose to call a brass counter a guinea, or to enact that a worthless piece of paper should pass current for the value written upon it, no loyal subject would ever dream of refusing the rubbish. One thing, indeed, the projector did not attempt to deny. The notes of the land bank would not circulate beyond Scotland, for it was not very likely that any foreigner would take them in exchange for goods. But this objection he considered of no moment. It was an axiom in political economy that a nation should pay for its imports not in coin, much less in land, but with the produce of its industry; and there could be no doubt but that, as soon as his scheme came into operation, the agricultural, manufacturing, mining, and fishing interests of the country would receive such a stimulus that Scotchmen, so far from being required to pay over coin for their imports, would find the balance of trade enormously in their favour.*

* See Chamberlayne's, Chamberlain's, or Chamberlen's numerous pamphlets on

Another scheme of a land bank, which Chamberlayne asserted had been purloined from his own writings, but which, if it were, was at least improved into something rational, was nearly at the same time submitted to the Parliament. Its projector was a young man then of little celebrity, but whose name was destined twelve years later to be widely known in Europe. The father of John Law was an Edinburgh goldsmith, who spent his latter days in retirement upon an estate he had purchased at Lauriston, a few miles from the capital, and who died in 1683 when his son was but in his thirteenth year. Young Law, at the age of twenty, escaped from maternal control, and went to London, where a handsome figure, vivacious manners, and an uncommon degree of assurance brought him into fashion. He had soon established a small reputation as a beau, a gambler, and a rake. His success with the ladies brought upon his hands, however, at least one unfortunate duel. He killed his man, and found it expedient to fly to the Continent to avoid the legal consequences of his action. But Law was no ordinary fop. He possessed a singular turn for calculation, and in intervals snatched from his pleasures seems to have amused himself with speculations upon commerce and banking. These speculations, as youth wore off, became the absorbing passion of his soul, and fired him with ambition. After several years spent in travelling about Europe he returned to Scotland, ingratiated himself with Argyle, whose kinsman he was in some remote degree, with Tweeddale, and with other powerful men. It was by their influence that his scheme, together with Chamberlayne's, was referred to the consideration of a committee of the Parliament.*

The members appear to have commenced their investigation in a spirit highly favourable to the establishment of a land bank. Neither the unsoundness of Law's, nor the absurdity of Chamberlayne's scheme, seems to have struck them. But gradually one overpowering objection to both projects arose in their minds. The bank, it was obvious, would become the universal mortgagee. It might be expected to hold in pledge

this subject. I believe that nomenclature has only ceased within the present century to be regarded as a subject for the exercise of taste and fancy.

* There are several biographies and memoirs of Law. I have been, however, content to extract this brief notice of him from the Biographie Générale.

every estate in the kingdom. An institution of such weight could scarcely be conducted with any safety to the public, unless the Government exercised a supervision over its transactions; and what an enormous addition of power would this supervision throw into the hands of Government. Even were Scotland independent, ruled by those she loved and trusted, such a strengthening of the royal authority would be imprudent. But the Government was in the hands of men whose aim in life was to keep her degraded and poor that England might be great and prosperous. At the bare thought of giving to persons like the English Ministers, the power of prying into the domestic affairs of Scottish landed proprietors, of granting or refusing loans, and of foreclosing if the borrower were unable to fulfil his engagements, the bank ceased to have a charm even in the eyes of those who were most sanguine about the merits of the scheme. Both projects were eventually shelved, in accordance with the recommendations of the committee, by a quiet resolve that it was inexpedient to force a paper credit upon the nation. It is worthy of notice that a plan of issuing notes secured on land and having a forced circulation, has since been tried on a gigantic scale, and it proved a failure. The first issues of *assignâts* by the French Government of 1790, were quite sufficiently represented by property, for the value of the confiscated domains far exceeded the aggregate amount of the *assignâts*. Yet their depreciation commenced almost immediately, and the cause of this decay of public confidence is not far to seek. Paper money, to keep its value, must not only be convertible, but immediately convertible into the property it represents. A bank whose property consists in coin, will readily apportion to the holder of a note his exact claim. But an institution whose wealth consists in acres, will take a long time in apportioning to a claimant his commensurate estate.

The Parliament had now sat for two months, and the whole of that time it had, with the exception of passing some Acts relating to trade, consumed in wrangling upon subjects which admitted of no agreement between parties. Fletcher of Saltoun, whose hatred of England and antipathy to despots seemed to increase every year, wanted the Parliament to pass

an Act reducing Scotland to his favourite form of government, a republic with a nominal king superadded out of deference to the stupid superstitious rabble who must have some puppet to worship. This motion and many other political measures having been defeated, the Ministers at length ventured to call attention to their bill for nominating commissioners, which had ever since the commencement of the session lain on the table. In spite of the general conviction that the bill, if passed, would have no effect, the minds of some of the Cavaliers misgave them now that the subject was actually under debate.* Attempts were made to add to what were considered already the insuperable difficulties in the way of an union. Hamilton proposed to insert a clause in the bill to preclude the commissioners from accepting any terms derogatory to the fundamental laws, privileges, or liberties of Scotland, a proposition which, had it been successful, must have effectually frustrated all endeavours to make the two kingdoms one. The Scottish commissioners would have been debarred from assenting to merge the Parliament of Scotland into that of England; and unless Scotland agreed to make this sacrifice all union was impossible. The Ministers exerted themselves to the utmost to defeat this clause, and it was eventually lost, but only by two votes. It seems that some half-dozen Cavaliers, having grown tired of spending the best months of the year in town, had slipped back to their homes to see what progress their men were making with the harvest.† To this accident it may be owing that the union subsists at the present day. Looking at the defiant attitude in which the two nations stood towards each other, the fury of the Scotch, the fast rising indignation of the English, the chances appear strong that, had the negotiations again proved abortive, there would shortly have been an outbreak of hostilities. And had war actually broken out, what time would have elapsed before the passions engendered by war had cooled down sufficiently to admit of the project being again entertained?

No sooner had the treaty escaped this peril, than it was again placed in imminent danger. A new clause was offered by the Opposition, providing that the commissioners to be

* Lockhart's Memoirs. † Ibid.

appointed, should not stir out of the kingdom until the English Parliament had repealed its enactments that, unless the treaty were concluded before Christmas, every Scotchman should from that date be regarded as an alien. This time the right chord had been struck, and the whole House, with the exception only of the Ministers and the placemen, ranged itself on the side of the Opposition. Argyle and his colleagues readily appreciated the anger which the bill, clogged with this infamous clause, was likely to arouse in the sister kingdom. With much presence of mind and ingenuity they proposed to the House to proceed upon it as a separate matter, and stated that, upon this understanding, they were willing to accede to the wishes of the members. With this proposal the majority was satisfied, and the clause was withdrawn.*

To the enemies of the projected union with England there yet, however, remained one hope. It was now agreed that commissioners should be appointed to conduct the negotiations, but nothing could be more certain than that the success or failure of the negotiations would depend entirely upon the character of the persons appointed. If men were chosen who were inflexibly determined to admit of no compromise on the subject of religion, and to stickle for commercial advantages to which no set of English commissioners could possibly accede, the conferences would speedily arrive at a miserable termination. The parties would separate with stronger convictions than ever of the impracticability of arranging an union, and the two nations would soon be at war. In the Act which the English Parliament had passed the power of selecting the commissioners had been left to the Queen. It was strongly desired by those who really hoped to see the union accomplished that the same power should be conferred upon her by the Parliament of Scotland. Her Majesty, it seemed to them, was entitled to be regarded as the fittest person to act as mediator between her two kingdoms, nor could the Scotch refuse to follow the example set by the English in this respect without implying a certain distrust in her. But unfortunately the House contained a strong body of politicians to whom Anne was Queen of Scotland only in name, who thought of her

* Records of the Scottish Parliament; Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Lockhart.

as the sovereign of a foreign country, and as being in the hands of counsellors ignorant of or directly inimical to Scottish interests. It is not improbable, therefore, that the selection of the commissioners would have been jealously retained by the Parliament had not an unexpected champion arisen to the aid of the Ministers. To the amazement and confusion of the Cavaliers, Hamilton suddenly rose, and moved that the choice of the commissioners should be left to the Queen.* Men could scarcely credit their senses at witnessing this instantaneous transformation from an opponent to a supporter of the Union. A dozen of his followers ran out of the House in disgust, exclaiming that the cause was lost now that their leader had turned traitor. The debate that followed was short but vehement. It resulted in a victory to the Ministers. Hamilton excused himself to his party by alleging that, now the bill was safe, he could see no harm in paying the Queen the compliment of leaving the selection of the commissioners to her; and it is a good illustration of the difficulty experienced by the Cavaliers in finding competent leaders that this excuse was received in good part, and that they continued to repose confidence in him. The real explanation of his conduct admits but of little doubt. He was a selfish politician, sincerely attached to no party, and with no other guiding principle than his own interests. He was beginning to perceive that opposition to the Government was of no use, that Anne's throne was too firm to be shaken, and that the Jacobites were too weak to do anything but get into trouble. He was therefore anxious to atone for the difficulties he had caused by rendering a service to the Government, and perhaps expected as a reward to be taken into favour and named one of the commissioners.

And now this important bill, destined to realize for Scotland nearly all the blessings of which Chamberlayne had dreamed, was formally passed. Seventy-two members, headed by the Duke of Athol, recorded their protest to it, but solely on the ground that it did not comport with the national dignity to extend the olive-branch to a rival, while that rival retained upon her statute-book an Act insulting to Scottish pride. The

* Lockhart. There can be little doubt that Hamilton's treachery to his party saved the Union.

Ministers performed their promise. It was made by unanimous agreement a standing order of the House that the negotiations for a treaty should not commence until the Act complained of had been repealed, and it was resolved to address the Queen, and request her to use her endeavours to procure that repeal. A few days afterwards the Parliament was adjourned.

CHAPTER XI.

In England the result of the elections held during the summer showed that public feeling had undergone a change since the commencement of the reign. The course pursued by the Tories throughout the late Parliament had not been regarded with favour by the great body of the nation. They were thought to be secretly disinclined to the war; and the war, enlivened as it had been by so many brilliant triumphs, still met with very general approval. People had remarked with no little disgust the various expedients which the predominant party in the House of Commons, under disguise of zeal for the Church, had employed to embarrass the Government. Their thrusting of Rooke and his dubious successes into competition with the exploits of Marlborough was justly regarded as an insult to the hero of whom Englishmen felt proud. But none of their misdemeanours seems to have excited such general reprobation as the policy they had adopted in reference to the Aylesbury voters. To maintain that the common law had no power to grant redress to a person forcibly deprived of a right, was an attempt to curtail the authority of the most venerable and esteemed institution in the land. But to throw a man into prison for the crime of bringing an action seemed to be nothing short of an attempt to establish sheer despotism. The Tories this time therefore made their appearance at the hustings under a disadvantage. They endeavoured, however, strenuously to recover the ground they had lost in public estimation. Their fears and zeal for the Church were paraded with greater ostentation and vehemence than upon any former occasion. "The danger the Church was in," says Burnet, "grew to be as the word given in an army. Men were known as they answered it." But the old cry seemed to have lost

much of its virtue. The public mind was for the moment more intent upon beating the French than upon superstition, and the Whigs were in favour. When the Parliament met on the 25th of October this party had the satisfaction to find itself more than a match for its opponents. The choice of a Speaker afforded an occasion for a fair trial of strength. After a sharp contest, during which the language employed, according to one gentleman, would have disgraced Billingsgate, Smith, the candidate supported by the Whigs and the Ministerial body, was elected in preference to the high Tory, Bromley, by two hundred and forty-eight votes against two hundred and five.*

The Whigs had good reason to congratulate themselves. It was not alone that popular sympathy was in their favour. There were strong indications that a change had taken place in the sentiments of the Queen. For a long time past the policy she had pursued in reference to her servants warranted the presumption that the Tories were declining in her estimation. Not one member of that extreme faction, by whose counsels she had first governed, now remained in power. Rochester had been coldly dismissed in 1703. Nottingham had in the following year found his influence so greatly impaired that he had resigned in disgust. Jersey and Sir Edward Seymour had both been deprived of their offices. Rooke had been made to suffer for the competition with Marlborough into which his friends had so unwisely forced him. He had been removed from his post of Vice-Admiral of England.† Her Majesty was supposed to entertain an extraordinary partiality for Buckinghamshire; but he, too, had just been required to surrender the Privy Seal. The manner in which these places were filled up showed plainly the increasing ascendancy which was being acquired by the Whigs. Rochester had been succeeded by the moderate Tory, Ormond; Nottingham by the almost neutral Harley. The Earl of Kent, a Whig, had taken the place of Jersey; Sir Edward Mansell, a Tory, that of Seymour. The three highest officers in command of the fleet,

* Burnet; Boyer; Lettres Historiques; Oldmixon's History.

† Rooke was undoubtedly sacrificed to the fury of the Whigs. About this time Wharton declared that his party held the Lord Treasurer's head in a bag. Rooke lived four years longer, but never went to sea again. He died 24th January, 1709.

Shovell, Leake, and Byng, the Duke of Newcastle, who obtained the Privy Seal, Robert Walpole, who was now introduced into the Council of Prince George, were all Whigs.

Yet those persons who thought that, because the Whigs were now evidently in the ascendant the Queen was casting off her prejudices against the party, or that she was at least convinced of the necessity of according them some share of favour, very greatly misunderstood the royal character. The opinions of Anne had undergone no change whatever. A Whig was still in her eyes all that was bad—a Republican and an atheist. Until the summer of 1705 she had not been required to make any great sacrifice of her feelings. The Duchess had, indeed, made an attempt to get Seymour's place of Comptroller of the Household for her son-in-law, Sunderland, but on this occasion she allowed herself to be restrained by persons wiser than herself, and the matter was not pressed.* The great increase of power, however, which the recent elections had given the Whigs convinced Godolphin and Marlborough of the necessity of propitiating a party which had now a majority in both Houses of Parliament. There was, happily, a way of accomplishing this result without giving any mortal offence to the Tories. That Wright should continue to hold the great seal to the exclusion of a number of lawyers of both parties more learned, more talented, and more respectable than himself was unreasonable, and a cause of reproach to the Government. It was decided, therefore, that a measure which had been for a long time in contemplation should now be taken, that he should be removed, and that the seat on the woolsack should be accorded to a Whig. For the honours and duties of the Chancellorship the claims of Somers stood pre-eminent. By his party he was regarded with the veneration paid to an oracle. His politics may have excited the anger of a faction, but his learning and probity had won the esteem of the nation. Yet for Somers the Queen entertained a dread and aversion secondary only in degree to that which she entertained for Sunderland. The zeal and fidelity with which he had served

* Sunderland was of all the Queen's subjects the person, except perhaps Wharton, for whom she entertained the greatest aversion. His manners were rough; his temper was excitable; and he carried Whiggism to the verge of republicanism.

the late King were a sufficient preparation of the royal ear for tales that, in addition to his demerits as a Whig, he was a voluptuary and a Socinian. To propose this great and good man to her Majesty for the director of her conscience would have been therefore a vain undertaking. The choice fell consequently upon a gentleman who, although only arrived at what might be considered in his profession the tender age of forty-one years, had attained to the highest reputation both at the bar and in the House of Commons. The only fault which the most candid Tories could discern in the graceful and mellifluent William Cowper was that he was a Whig. Yet it was not without great difficulty that Anne was prevailed upon to consent to his elevation. Godolphin reasoned and expostulated with her; the Duchess, out of patience with the obstinacy and stupidity of Mrs. Morley, who seemed to imagine that, in promoting a Whig to an important post in the kingdom, she was imperilling the Church and wronging her people, probably lost all sense of decorum. The importunities of Mrs. Freeman on this occasion drew from the Queen the first of a series of peevish and mildly sarcastic letters, which ought to have opened the eyes of the old favourite to the danger of the course she was pursuing.* In the distress of mind to which her Majesty was reduced, she turned to Marlborough with the lingering hope that he might be of the same opinion as herself. The answer of the General was an earnest and affectionate exhortation that she would be guided by the counsels of the Lord Treasurer.† Under this pressure she at length yielded. Cowper received the great seal with the title of Lord Keeper.

The influence of this accomplished man was discernible in every part of the royal speech, its liberal sentiments, its more elegant phraseology, and its improved grammar. Anne, after recommending the vigorous prosecution of the war, and referring with admiration to the gallant attitude of the Duke of Savoy, passed to the subject of the Union. She intended shortly, she said, to issue commissions under the powers conferred upon her by the Acts passed in England and Scotland, and it was her hearty wish that a complete union might be

* Conduct of the Duchess.
† Marlborough to the Queen, September 29, October 10.

effected between the two kingdoms. But there was another union which she considered herself bound to recommend to her subjects in the most earnest and affectionate manner—an union among themselves. She had observed with grief that there were persons who strove to foment animosities by insinuating and even publishing in print that the Church was in danger. Reports of this kind, she was sure, could be meant only to conceal designs which the authors dared not publicly own. The best proof any one could give of his zeal for the Church, was to join heartily in prosecuting the war against an enemy whose object it certainly was to extirpate both the religion and the liberties of the country. The speech did not conclude without a brief but emphatic sentence, in which her Majesty expressed her determination to maintain inviolably the Toleration.*

The addresses sent up by both Houses were loyal responses to the affectionate and motherly exhortations of the Queen. This ceremony performed, the members proceeded to their duties in a spirit which showed how little impression those exhortations had made upon their hearts. The first business of the Commons was to adjudicate upon the contested elections, and the Whigs, now the predominant faction, naturally retaliated upon their rivals the unfairness with which they had been treated by the previous Parliament. One of the elections against which a petition was presented was that for the borough of St. Albans, where the Duchess, it was notorious, reigned supreme and absolute. She had exerted her influence in favour of Admiral Killigrew, who was, as might be supposed, a staunch Whig; but there was no proof that she had used any illegal means to obtain his election. The opportunity, however, for saying some sharp things about her Grace was too good for a Tory to pass by. Bromley, whose irritability of temper had been much increased by his recent discomfiture, rudely compared her to Alice Perrers, the courtesan, who dispensed the royal favour in the dotage of Edward III.†

About a fortnight after the commencement of the session, the Tories, however, committed a blunder which, for a time, completely alienated from them the sympathies of the Queen.

* Parliamentary History.

† Burnet. He says that the Duchess was regarded by the whole party as the person who had reconciled the Queen to the Whigs.

Haversham, whose ambition it was to lead the party in the Upper House, gave notice that he would move for an address to her Majesty requesting her to invite the presumptive heir to the crown to reside in the country. The measure, he urged, was requisite for the safety of her own person, the preservation of the constitution, and the security of the Church. Anne, whose morbid dread of seeing her intended successor was well known to her friends, was thrown into an agony of fear. Upon the day when the motion was made, she went down to the House to hear the debate. The subject was handled by the Tory Peers with very little regard to her feelings. Allusions were made to the Duke of Gloucester, that sole child of hers, whom she had succeeded in rearing beyond the age of infancy. "We must not neglect our own safety," said Haversham. "A successor, though not the child of the prince, is the child of the sovereign and people." "The Queen," suggested Buckingham, "may survive her faculties, and be like a child in the hands of others." Rochester, Nottingham, and other Tories, supported the motion.* Their object, there can be little doubt, was to reduce the Ministers and the Whigs to a dilemma. If they should oppose a measure tending to render the Protestant succession more secure, a suspicion might well arise both in England and the Court of Hanover as to their fidelity to the principles of the Revolution. It was idle to affirm that the country was safe while the Princess Sophia was residing at a distant Court whence she could not possibly be fetched in much less time than three weeks. The Pretender might be in England within three days after the demise, and the capricious, thoughtless multitude might be captivated with the charms of hereditary right. On the other hand, should they support the motion, the Queen, they knew well, would never forgive them for the load of misery they would have heaped upon her. Under these circumstances they elected to oppose the motion, and it was accordingly negatived by a considerable majority. Burnet then came forward with a remedy for any ill effects which might arise from this vote. He proposed to appoint a regency, into whose hands, in the absence of the lawful successor, the royal authority might fall upon the demise.

* Parliamentary History.

Four days afterwards this proposition was brought forward in form by Wharton, who was in his happiest vein of sarcastic pleasantry. He had not been present, he said, during the last debate, but he was delighted with the accounts of it which had been given him. Her Majesty, when she so earnestly recommended to them unanimity of feeling, must surely have been possessed by a divinity. A miracle had followed upon her words. It seemed that they were all now for the Protestant succession. When he remembered how for many years men had argued, voted, and protested, he could not but be convinced that a miracle had been wrought. He could only implore the new converts to the doctrines of the Revolution not to suffer their excess of zeal to hurry them into injudicious measures. His proposition was that, until the arrival of the lawful successor, the administration should be carried on by a regency composed of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor or Keeper of the Great Seal, the High Treasurer, the President of the Council, the Lord Privy Seal, the High Admiral, and the Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench for the time being. The next successor should also be invited to send over a list of such persons as she should desire to act concurrently with those appointed by Parliament, which list should be sealed up and not opened until the demise took place.

The Tories were confounded at the turn matters had now taken. In their eagerness to embarrass their rivals they had not hesitated to wound the most sensitive feelings of the Queen. They had perhaps offended her beyond the chance of forgiveness. The Whigs had profited by the occasion to earn her gratitude; and it now seemed that, by means of their project of a regency, they were to escape from those suspicions which their courtly vote might have been expected to excite. When the bill embodying Wharton's proposition was brought in, the Tories struggled hard to procure its rejection. They tried to render it unpalatable by a variety of inane and absurd amendments and additions. Their opponents watched the futility of their efforts with malicious glee. Every speech that now came from a Tory was calculated to turn public suspicion upon the party. The bill was finally passed. It was sent down to the Commons, and there the struggle was renewed. The Whigs of the Lower House were divided upon some points of

minor importance. It was not until the last days of February that the bill could be presented to the Queen for her acceptance.*

The impression which this manœuvre of the Tories had made upon the mind of Anne is best told in her own words. She had been often terrified by rumours that the Whigs had it in contemplation to invite over the successor. It was likely enough, she thought, that her enemies would try and do her this unkindness. But that the proposition would emanate from the men whom she had always considered her friends, the guardians of the Church, the supporters of her throne, had been the last of her expectations. For a short time it seemed as if the resentment she bore to the Tories and her gratitude to the Whigs had wrought an entire change in her feelings. "I believe, dear Mrs. Freeman," she wrote, "we shall not disagree as we have formerly done. I am sensible of the services those people have done me of whom you have a good opinion, and will countenance them. And I am thoroughly convinced of the malice and insolence of others you have been always speaking against.†

A second motion of Haversham, to inquire into the miscarriages of the last campaign, which had been occasioned by the Allies, was very properly negatived. That the Imperial Ministers had, by their dilatoriness in sending forward their troops, caused the failure of Marlborough's plan on the Moselle; that the field deputies and officers of the Dutch army had, by their obstinacy and self-conceit, hindered the Commander-in-Chief from winning a great battle on the Ische, were things generally admitted both in England and Holland. But the conduct of the Imperial Ministers and the Dutch deputies had already been made the subject of private remonstrance, and a public inquiry could do no more than breed recriminations and an ill-feeling between the nations engaged in the arduous contest with France. Instead, therefore, of adopting Haversham's proposals both Houses joined in an address to the Queen, beseeching her to keep up a good correspondence with all the confederates, and especially with the States-general.

* Parliamentary History; Burnet; Boyer; Lettres Historiques.
† The letter is given in the Conduct of the Duchess.

Before Christmas a piece of real work had been accomplished, in comparison with which the record of the idle contests between parties sinks into insignificance. All the clauses in that Act of Parliament which had given such offence to the Scotch, were repealed. The motion originated with the Tories. They were in hopes, it was thought, that the Whigs, who had had the chief share in framing the obnoxious provisions, would defend their handiwork. But the Whigs were now on good terms with the Ministers, and disposed to afford every facility to the latter to accomplish the Union. Thus the sole impediment to the meeting of the Commissioners was now removed.

To the fearful amount of expenditure occasioned by the war the Tories still offered no objection. The supplies were voted with the same promptness as in preceding years, and upon nearly the same scale. Four hundred thousand pounds were granted for her Majesty's proportion of the subsidies to her Allies. The total amount authorised to be raised was four millions and a half. Of this sum more than two millions were attributed to the service of the navy.

The Whigs were, as may be conceived, in great exultation at finding themselves, after undergoing three years of humiliation, again predominant in the legislature. They were not indisposed to make the most of their advantage. Their adversaries had tried to influence the elections by insinuating that they were abetting the Dissenters to overturn the Church. The crown lawyers indeed were weary with prosecuting, and their runners with pursuing the authors and printers of a hundred contemptible squibs against the Ministers, the Whigs, the war, the Dutch, and the Emperor. One long and doleful lament entitled "The Memorial of the Church of England humbly offered to the consideration of all true lovers of our Church and Constitution," had obtained so wide a circulation as to alarm and enrage the whole Whig party. It was written chiefly by that old offender, Dr. Drake, who could no more keep himself from scribbling on political subjects than Defoe, and upon whom the danger of irritating great men in power acted as a stimulus. The publication had undergone the fate which but too commonly overtook the Doctor's compositions. At the instance of the grand jury of London, who were Whigs to a man, it had been

burned by the hangman.* The Whigs now thought that it would not be amiss if that multitude of squires and clergymen, who had got it into their heads that there was an organized conspiracy to overthrow the Church, should hear their favourite orators on the subject confuted. Upon the motion of Halifax, therefore, a day was appointed to consider whether the Church was in danger.

The more sensible and temperate of the Tory peers would have preferred to baulk the design of the motion by preserving silence. But the challenge had set Rochester's blood on fire, and he spurned at restraint. When the day came he rose, and contended with great vehemence that there was ample reason for the cry that the Church was in danger. Was it in safety now that the Act of Security was law, and the whole Presbyterian population of the neighbouring kingdom arming against this country? Was it safe with a Popish pretender to the throne in existence, and the Protestant successor hundreds of miles away? And what interpretation was to be put upon the designs of that party which refused to the Church a safeguard so reasonable as that provided by the bill against occasional conformity? Halifax, in reply to the first point, said that, if the Scotch were to invade England, the country had defended itself before, and was now better able than ever to defend itself again. As for the Princess Sophia, he had never heard of her absence being reckoned a cause of danger to the Church until within the last eight days. Not long since a clergyman had been exclaiming against her for an unbaptised Lutheran. It was a little remarkable, he continued, that the cry of the Church being in danger should only be raised at times when the Tories were out of place. It commenced soon after the succession of William, and was kept up throughout his reign. It ceased for a short time after the accession of her present Majesty, and had now broken out again since she had been pleased to make some alterations in her ministry.

As Halifax was concluding his speech with the assertion that the Church was in no manner of danger, Compton, the fierce Protestant bishop, entered the House. The Church was anything but safe, he broke out, when irreligion and profanity were

* Boyer; Lettres Historiques.

carried to such lengths as at present. One of his clergy had recently presumed to publish a most vile book, and he had the mortification to find that the law had so many quirks he could not reach the offender. Another had preached a sermon before the Lord Mayor, in which he maintained the right of subjects to rebel against their lawful sovereign. Was the Church to be held secure when clergymen could deliver themselves with impunity of such monstrous doctrines?* The Peers who listened to this tirade could not but remember that of all the clergy who had distinguished themselves by their resistance to James, the boldest and most zealous had been Compton himself. To hear an ecclesiastic who, in his fervour against a tyrant, had flung off his gown and appeared at the head of an insurgent troop, now express his horror at doctrines which he himself had so sturdily carried into practice, was not a little diverting. In truth, the inconsistency between the theories held by the orthodox clergyman of this age, and his conduct when the season came for applying them, is among the most amusing curiosities of human nature. The duty of obedience to the higher powers had, in theory, no limit. The sovereign, it might seem from the exhortations and homilies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, could command his subject to rob, murder, or bow down to a three-headed idol, and if the subject refused to commit one sin, he committed another by disobeying. But James brought the value of these theories about obedience to the test. He commanded his clergy to read the declaration of indulgence, and out of ten thousand men only some half-dozen were found willing to obey him. That Compton was sincere in believing that non-resistance to the sovereign was one of the most sacred ordinances of the Christian faith, his character will not permit us to doubt. Yet that Compton was not the man to submit to a selfish and wrong-headed tyrant, we have positive proof.

The two clergymen who had excited the wrath of the good bishop were Edmund Hickeringhill, rector of All Saints, in Colchester, and Benjamin Hoadly, the rector of St. Peter le Poor, in Broad Street. The former had in his youth been a lieutenant in Cromwell's army, and his sanity had at that time

* See the debate in the Parliamentary History, and the remarks of Burnet.

probably contracted a taint which was never afterwards thrown off. The trouble he gave to successive diocesans was infinite. Although a priest in holy orders, it was his delight to rail against priestcraft. He belonged to that extreme section of the established clergy who desired to eliminate from the services of the Church the last relics of Popery. He derided the ceremony of turning towards the altar when reciting the belief, of bowing at the name of Jesus; and thought that organs should be pulled down and sold to the playhouses. His most offensive doctrine, however, was that the bishops should be abolished, and their revenues made over to the poor clergy. The works of this half-crazy priest are so wild as to be scarcely intelligible; yet we are assured that they had once a wide circulation, perhaps owing to the activity of his brother priests in denouncing them.* Hoadly was a man of very different stamp. His fame as a controversialist was unrivalled. A Low Churchman and a Whig, he spent his life in combating the errors of High Churchmen and Tories, and had learning and ingenuity sufficient to win a victory if victory were really possible in the field of theology. His subsequent career affords a good illustration of the little sympathy existing between Government and people in the time of the Georges. By the former he was promoted to the bishopric of Bangor; but went in too wholesome a fear of the latter to trust his person within that diocese. By the great tribe of eighteenth-century Churchmen his doctrines were held in abhorrence; yet he finished his days as Bishop of Winchester.†

Burnet's speech upon this occasion contained the sentiments of a liberal and benevolent mind. One of the dangers threatening the Church, he remarked, which had been much dwelt upon, was that which it incurred from the Dissenters. He did not believe that their numbers were increasing; nay, he firmly believed that Dissent was on the wane. The toleration had softened the tempers and improved the understandings of this class of persons. The Dissenters would, he felt convinced, remain

* Newcourt, Repertorium Ecclesiasticum. Some of the crazy utterances of this clergyman were brought forward at Sacheverell's trial in support of the argument that the Church was in danger through the profanity or wrongheadedness of individuals.

† Biographia Britannica.

innocuous so long as they were left in the enjoyment of their privileges. That a spirit of irreligion and profanity was abroad, was undeniable; but was it at a higher pitch than formerly? The Devil would always have his agents in this world, let a Government take what care it might. It was for the clergy themselves to counteract this source of danger by the example they afforded of their lives.

But the most remarkable speech of all came from Wharton. With almost inconceivable effrontery the rake, the gambler, the habitual blasphemer, the professing atheist announced, with a ludicrous simulation of piety, that, although born and bred a Dissenter, he had conformed to the Church when he grew up, that by God's blessing he was firmly resolved to continue in it, that he would go as far in defending it as any man, and only wished to know in what its dangers consisted. He had read the Memorial very carefully; but could only make out from that publication that the D—— of B——, the E—— of R——, and the E—— of N—— were out of place. What those letters meant he could not undertake to guess. Perhaps they were some cabalistic formula framed for the security of the Church. But if they had any reference to certain noble peers present, he remembered to have seen some of them sitting in the Court of High Commission, and there had been then no complaint that the Church was in danger.

The result of the debate was a victory to the Whigs by sixty-one voices over thirty. The triumphant party then passed a resolution that the Church, which had been rescued from the most extreme danger by King William III., of glorious memory, was now, under the happy reign of her Majesty, in a most safe and flourishing condition, and that whoever insinuated the contrary was an enemy to the Queen, the Church, and the kingdom. A message was sent to the Commons requesting their concurrence in this resolution, and the message was taken into consideration by a committee of the whole House. Bromley, Packington, and the High Tories, rendered savage by their impotence, vented their anger in speeches abounding with insinuations against the Ministers.* One argument propounded by Packington to deter the Commons from concurring, was new

* Boyer. Only a very brief abstract of the speeches is, however, preserved.

and ingenious. If, he suggested, this resolution were passed, and presented by both Houses to her Majesty, it would acquire a force tantamount to that of an Act of Parliament, and would become a convenient weapon in the hands of any evil Minister who might take a fancy to abolish Episcopacy. It would stop persons from exclaiming against his designs until the iniquity was accomplished. The Tories ventured to take the sense of the House as to whether the last clause in the resolution should stand, but found themselves in a minority of no less than fifty votes.

The resolution was accordingly presented to the Queen in an address from both Houses, and her Majesty was requested to punish the authors and publishers of those seditious and scandalous treatises which had declared the Church to be in danger. Anne immediately issued a proclamation offering a reward of two hundred pounds for the apprehension of the author of the Memorial, and of fifty pounds for the apprehension of David Edwards, the printer. Edwards had taken the precaution to shift his lodgings into the Sanctuary of Whitefriars; but he could not afford, nor did he think it necessary, to absent himself long from his business. He wrote to Harley engaging to reveal the author of the book if he were promised his pardon, and his condition was accepted. Upon examination, however, his story proved not a little unsatisfactory. The manuscript, he stated, had been brought him by unknown hands. His suspicions as to the authorship pointed to three well-known and popular leaders of the Tory party in the House of Commons, Ward, Poley, and Sir Humphrey Mackworth; but proofs he had none to give. Harley probably felt convinced that the man was lying, and was as well aware that Drake was the author of the book as Edwards himself. But upon liars and libellers, especially on the Tory side, Harley was never disposed to be severe, and the matter was suffered to drop.

There were, however, other offenders who had been less discreet than Drake and his printer, and whom the Government could not safely venture to cover with the veil of oblivion. Stevens, the clergyman, who had presumed to cast a lance at Marlborough, was tried and sentenced to the pillory as before related. Perhaps the most remarkable among them was Doctor Joseph Browne, who had published a brief but very dull copy

of verses ironically praising the Ministers. Browne was a blockhead who had, a few years back, set the medical profession in a roar by publishing a treatise against the theory of the circulation of the blood. For the exercise of his poetical talents he was now rewarded with the pillory. But the poor man could not or would not be taught discretion. Scarcely was he delivered from his tormentors when a letter to Mr. Secretary Harley, the purport of which was to justify the former libel, issued from the press in his name. The luckless author was again seized, tried, and pilloried.*

The clergy of England were, as might be expected, divided upon the great question which had now become the test of every man's politics. Convocation had met upon the same day as the Parliament. The bishops, the majority of whom were Low Church divines, and owed their elevation to Whig administrations, framed an address to the Queen, which affirmed all insinuations that the Church was in danger to be false and groundless. The inferior clergy, Tories to the backbone, refused to concur. Neither House would yield a point to the other; and Anne was at length compelled to put a stop to the unseemly squabbles which resulted by instructing the Archbishop of Canterbury to prorogue the Convocation.

But the country could afford to view with composure the dissensions between its spiritual guides. The dreaded disputes between the two parties in the Parliament were now at an end, and there seemed a fair prospect that the next two years at least would be years of enforced unanimity and of vigorous prosecution of the war. The confidence of the monied class in the Government, now that the Whigs were again in the ascendant, was shown by unequivocal signs. Two loans were raised in the city this year, one of two millions eight hundred thousand pounds upon annuities terminable in ninety-nine years, and the other of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds for the Emperor upon the security of a portion of the Imperial revenues. The first of these loans was raised at six and a half, the second at eight per cent. interest, and without

* Oldmixon. Another unfortunate poet deserves commemoration, Edward Ward, author of Hudibras Redivivus, a work which, although destitute of literary merit, throws some light on the manners and customs of the age.

the least difficulty.* Well might Godolphin, after recruiting the Exchequer so easily and so cheaply, refer with complacency to the financial miseries of the French king, who, promise what interest he might, could not get his subscription lists filled.† Little by little, moreover, a hope was gaining ground that, after all, the negotiations between the Scotch and English commissioners might not prove such a comedy as had been at one time apprehended. One subject alone created some uneasiness. From some causes there was a deficiency of sailors, the service being short of at least ten thousand men. Strong remedies were applied by the Parliament to this grievance. An Act was passed enjoining all magistrates to make search for concealed seamen, and imposing a fine upon every householder who harboured a seaman.‡ A commission was appointed by her Majesty to inquire into the best means of manning the navy in future. Meanwhile the efforts of the captains of ships to make up their complements must have kept the populations of seaport towns in a state of never-ending terror. Pressgangs were continually going the round of the taverns, and seizing upon every luckless vagabond who could not give a satisfactory account of his ability to earn a living on shore.§

Two measures adopted by this Parliament, the first in which the influence of the Whigs, after a period of depression, again predominated, deserve to be recorded. Somers, one of the very few lawyers who have been able to see defects in that legal machinery by which they have attained to wealth and reputation, introduced and carried through, in spite of strong opposition in the Lower House, an Act sweeping away some nonsensical rules of the Courts established by timid or stupid judges who had been in their graves for centuries. Halifax procured the passing of another Act securing to public use the

* Lettres Historiques. The list of subscribers to the Imperial Loan was published. It contained only two hundred and eighty-eight names. Prince George subscribed £20,000, Marlborough £10,000, Godolphin £5,000. Burnet says that the amount raised was £500,000; but this was a mistake. See the Marlborough Despatches.

† Godolphin to Marlborough, an undated letter.

‡ Statute 4 and 5 Anne, c. 6.

§ Lettres Historiques. The writer says, "On saisit dans les rues et dans les cabarets toutes les personnes inutiles que l'on y rencontra, même les gens de métier qui ne sont pas actuellement employés." Poor debtors were forced into the service.

Cottonian collection of manuscripts, a nucleus round which has gathered the unrivalled library of the British Museum. It would be difficult to say whether every subsequent plaintiff has owed more to Somers or every subsequent student to Halifax.

The Parliament was, upon the 19th of March, prorogued by Anne, who complimented the members upon the unanimity and zeal they had displayed. About a month afterwards Marlborough, who had been in England since January, returned to Holland.

He departed from these shores intent upon a grand scheme similar in most respects to that which had led to the victory of Blenheim. In the same manner as in the commencement of 1704, it had seemed that nothing could prevent the Emperor from being forced to relinquish the Grand Alliance except an advance of the English and Dutch forces into Germany, so it seemed now that, unless similar assistance were afforded to the Duke of Savoy, that member of the confederacy would have to submit to France. Eugene, after his ineffectual attempt to penetrate into Piedmont, had left the remains of his troops famishing in the Brescian to go and clamour for recruits and food in Vienna. But the Emperor was at the end of his resources. Not a farthing could he raise without England pledged her credit for the advance; and although a sum of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds was now on its way from that country to replenish the Imperial exchequer, the aid was altogether inadequate to put the Imperial armies on a proper footing. Such a sum might keep a handful of troops alive in Italy, but could hardly stimulate a discouraged soldiery to face and conquer three times their number of French. The Duke of Savoy, after mournfully witnessing the retreat of Eugene, had shut himself up in his capital of Turin, the fortifications of which city he was diligently repairing. A noble zeal, inspired by the gallant bearing of their sovereign, animated the citizens. Every post in the surrounding country was strengthened; every man capable of bearing arms submitted to military discipline. Yet when all was done this patriotic population could not but admit that, in view of the legions which France could bring against them, their escape must depend far more upon succour from without than upon their own efforts.

Such was the position of the ally to whose rescue Marlborough was desirous of marching with every soldier he could extort from England, Holland, and Prussia. His plan was to send at least twenty thousand men through Germany. When they had gained the passes of the Alps it was his intention to hasten after them, to take the command, and thus to form a junction or to concert a plan of combined operations with Eugene.* The fleet would at the same time effect a diversion. Shovel was to set on shore near Rochefort six regiments of French refugees who were to be raised in England for the purpose, together with two or three British regiments to second them. The force was to seize on the town of Saintes, march into Guienne, stir up the embers of Protestantism in that province, and then if possible open communications with the Camisards of the Cevennes. Even if the descent were unsuccessful in itself, the fright and confusion it would create could, it was imagined, hardly fail to quicken Vendôme's departure from Italian soil.

But all Marlborough's hopes of joining Eugene and of concerting with him measures that would throw even Blenheim into the shade, were dashed to the ground when he came to sound the States-general. That body was, at the commencement of 1706, in a fever of alarm on account of a series of misfortunes which had just happened on the Upper Rhine principally through the indolence and carelessness of Prince Louis. That commander had, after Marlborough's retreat from the Moselle, been able to make in his usual formal and dilatory fashion the conquest of two or three places on the left bank of the Rhine. For Villars, although for a short time in high spirits at having baulked the most renowned general and the strongest army of the Allies, and confident that he was about to enter upon a career of glory, had soon found himself reduced to utter impotence. As soon as news of the forcing of the lines in Brabant reached Versailles, orders were despatched to the unlucky Marshal to send the greater part of his men to the assistance of the Elector and Villeroi. He had found him-

* Coxe's Memoirs. He refers to Secretary Harley's instructions to the Duke. This design of a campaign in Italy was kept so secret that no contemporary writer makes any mention of it.

self in consequence unable to interfere with the movements of the Prince of Baden. But no movement of the Imperial troops escaped the notice of the alert and sagacious Villars. During the winter he heard that the Prussians had been recalled by their King, that the troops which remained to guard the lines at Bischweiler were few in number, and that their commander, the Prince, had gone to nurse himself at his luxurious palace near Rastadt. He at once communicated with Versailles. He asked for the co-operation of Marsin; and as no immediate danger was apprehended on the side of Flanders, his request was granted. The promptitude of Villars seldom left an adversary time to repair his errors. The Prince was startled by a report that the French were assembling in the neighbourhood. He roused himself, and repaired to his army. Scarcely had he reached the camp when the enemy was upon him, having waded through tracts of inundated land, and dragged cannon along paths which he had imagined to be wholly impracticable. The surprise was so complete that the Germans made hardly any resistance. The Prince had just time to make his escape across the Rhine, leaving all his conquests to be recaptured at the enemy's leisure.*

The effect of a French victory, in whatever part of the world it might be, was always to set the Dutch trembling for the safety of their frontiers. Marlborough quickly found that, so far from being disposed to consent to his proceeding to Italy with the bulk of the troops, they were resolutely set against his quitting the Netherlands at all. The States-general, in truth, clung to their captain-general much after the manner that frightened children cling to their nurse. Deputies from that august assembly approached him with flattery but little in keeping with the severe simplicity of republican institutions. They were not unwilling to make him considerable concessions, if by so doing they might secure his continuance among them. They would consent to his detaching ten thousand men for service in Italy. He had during the previous campaign complained with but too much justice of the way in which he had been fettered by the field deputies. These personages should have private instructions this time to agree to every-

* Mémoires de Villars; Campagne d'Allemagne; Lettres Historiques.

thing he proposed—nay, if he pleased, he should choose them himself. Marlborough was greatly cast down. It was his firm belief that he could do nothing in the Netherlands, that the French would keep to positions where it was impossible to attack them, and that the whole season would be lost. The Italian project was, however, perforce abandoned, not a little to the satisfaction of some friends at home. There were other persons besides the Dutch who clung to Marlborough for protection. Godolphin had been in a fever of anxiety ever since the scheme had been broached. To have his friend so far away from him at a time when the atmosphere was rife with rumours of Tory conspiracies and Whig combinations had been a prospect upon which he could not look without terror.*

With a heavy heart Marlborough then set about constructing the plan of a campaign in the Netherlands. By the end of the second week in May the English and Dutch troops were all, in pursuance of his directions, assembled at Tongres. The Prussian and Danish contingents were still wanting, the former having indeed only just commenced their march from the fatherland. The Danes, an important body twelve thousand strong, were not so far off; but the Duke of Wurtemberg, their commander, absolutely refused to stir from his quarters without some satisfactory assurance were given him that the arrears of pay due from the States, and the non-payment of which had caused him much distress, should be promptly discharged. Such pressure had it become necessary to apply to the Government of a country reputed the richest on the Continent.† In fact, every petty sovereign and potentate who condescended to loan his army to the States-general was in a state of exasperation at having to wait for his money, and exclaiming that this community of traders wanted to insult him. The true cause of the want of punctuality shown by the Dutch in meeting their engagements it is not difficult to

* Several letters to Godolphin and the Duchess. In one dated April 28, May 9, Marlborough says, "The deputies made me many compliments, and told me that if they might assure the States that I would continue at the head of the army on their frontier, there should be *nothing* I could think reasonable to propose, but they would readily comply withal." For Godolphin's sentiments see his letter to Marlborough, April 28, May 9.

† The Marlborough Despatches; Coxe's Memoirs; Lamberty. Every year produced some bickering about money-matters.

determine. The wealth of the nation was undeniable; but the system of collecting the revenues was cumbrous, and ill-adapted to seasons of great public emergency. Each province of the union was assessed by general agreement at a certain amount. The provincial government in its turn made an assessment upon each city within its dominion. The temporary distress that prevailed in some of the provinces made it necessary for the government of such provinces to plead for time while it was conducting negotiations for a loan with the richer partners of the confederacy. It thus happened frequently that the total amount of each year's assessments was not paid into the common treasury until long after the period at which it fell due.

So notorious indeed was the dissatisfaction of the auxiliary Powers with the States-general, as to inspire Louis with the conviction that Marlborough would be this year short of men.* A victory was what he longed for most fervently. During 1705 he had, in the despair engendered by his pecuniary distresses, condescended to make known to the Dutch Government through Rouillé, a merchant whose business frequently took him to the Hague, the terms upon which he was willing to treat for peace. He would make great concessions as to the barrier of fortified towns which the Republic required, possibly even that the Belgic provinces should be erected into an independent State. He would also consent to the dismemberment of his grandson's dominions so far as to give Naples and Sicily to the Archduke Charles.† These offers of his Christian Majesty, Heinsius communicated to Marlborough, with the further information that several deputies of the States-general, with Buys, the Pensioner of Amsterdam, at their head, were inclined to treat upon this basis. Marlborough imparted what he had heard to Godolphin, and the two friends were for some time in much anxiety as to the course the peace-party might pursue.‡ From a Dutch point of view, the propositions were unquestionably tempting. The Republic was promised all it was likely to get by years of successful fighting. The Emperor and his

* Campagne de Flandre; the King to Villeroi, May 6.
† Heinsius to Marlborough, August 15, 1705; Mémoires de Torcy.
‡ Marlborough to Godolphin, August 27, September 7; September 2—13; November 1—12.

brother would, of course, think themselves shamefully deserted and betrayed unless they were put in possession of all the dominions of the late King of Spain; but as to what such distant potentates might say or do the worthy burghers concerned themselves little. If the English chose to place their ambition in conquering kingdoms for other people, they were welcome to do so. But if the Republic could get such a barrier as would enable its citizens to pursue their business in peace and security, of what use was it to prolong this troublesome and expensive war?

Such seem to have been the opinions of Buys and his friends, and the party was strong enough to cause considerable uneasiness to Marlborough and Godolphin. What they determined to do was to make known in the most public manner the terms upon which only England was disposed to treat. The royal speech delivered to the Parliament which met towards the close of this year contained the first distinct announcement that nothing short of Philip's resigning the Spanish monarchy would content this country, and Harley was instructed to communicate to Buys these views of his Government. This action decided the matter. The great majority of the States-general were afraid to incur the resentment of England for the bare chance of obtaining the fulfilment of promises held out to them by the French king. The answer returned to Rouillé was therefore haughty and unconciliating in its character, and its effect upon Louis was to open his eyes to a just appreciation of his situation. He saw that Holland was completely under the influence of England, and that a party had got possession of the Government of that country which was bitterly hostile to himself, elated with extraordinary successes, and determined to push their advantages until France was degraded to the level of a second-rate power. To such a humiliating sacrifice as was required of him, that of forcing his grandson to lay down the crown he himself had placed upon his head, he could not bring himself. While the Allies were thus successful in the field there could be no hope of his obtaining peace upon any reasonable terms. It was indispensably necessary to inflict upon them some defeat which would lower their confidence. To his friend Villeroi he opened his heart without reserve.

A victory, he told the Marshal, was of vital importance to him at this conjuncture; and added his Majesty significantly, "I hope to see you return to Marly at the end of the campaign, covered with glory."*

The sensitive vanity of Villeroi made him place upon the King's words a meaning which had certainly not been intended. He imagined that he was being reproached for having stood on the defensive throughout the last campaign. That he, Villeroi, reputed the most daring and energetic of all the French marshals, should require stimulating in this manner! He departed for the army in a mood which set Chamillart trembling for the consequences. The high hopes of a victory which Louis had formed were, in fact, based upon calculations made with almost mathematical preciseness. No man was ever less disposed than the cool-headed French monarch to trust any military operation to fortune, to rely for success merely on the skill of his marshals or the courage of his troops. He expected a victory only when he advanced against the enemy with such a preponderance of force as must, as far as human foresight could go, preclude all chance of failure. Such a preponderance he now felt certain he could give to Villeroi. He had despatched orders to Marsin to leave Villars on the Rhine, and hasten to join the army of the Netherlands with eighteen battalions and forty squadrons, an addition which would raise that army to a strength of seventy-four thousand men. All the troops that Marlborough could get together would not, he reckoned, exceed two-thirds of this number. The Prussians, if they joined him at all, could not reach him for some weeks, and, as far as the information received at Versailles went, he was not likely to have the assistance of the Danish contingent. Thus the English and Dutch alone, only forty-eight thousand strong, would have to withstand the shock of seventy-four thousand French.†

Chamillart, tormented with forebodings about the angry and conceited simpleton who was to carry out the King's schemes, sent off courier after courier to reiterate his Majesty's orders that nothing should be undertaken until the corps of Marsin had joined the army. Perhaps no other Frenchman than

* St. Simon. † Campagne de Flandre; St. Simon.

Villeroi would have dared to disobey orders so distinct and imperative. But no Frenchman ever stood so little in awe of the imperious and imposing despot as Villeroi. He received the King's positive injunctions in the sense of suggestions from a friend who was a little over anxious about a commander so able and prudent as himself. He was, he presumed, already much superior in force to Marlborough. Why then should he wait to have a partner in the glory of demolishing him? The proper course was evidently to attack the Allies before the Prussians joined them, and they had made up matters with the Danes. So confident was Villeroi of success, and so anxious was he to keep his expected laurels to himself, that he determined to send no notice of the design he was about to put into execution to his colleague, the Elector of Bavaria, who was then at Brussels. Upon the same day that the English and Dutch troops united near Tongres, the Marshal issued from his impregnable camp under the walls of Louvain at the head of upwards of sixty thousand men, and marched towards Tirlemont.*

It was with unmixed delight that Marlborough received the intelligence that Villeroi had, of his own accord, abandoned a position from which it might have been the work of an entire campaign to dislodge him.† The Allied army was instantly set in motion towards the French, the march being directed round the sources of the great Gheet, in order to prevent the Marshal from regaining Louvain, should his heart fail him, and from adopting the river as a line of defence, should he determine upon making a stand. Its numbers were by this time little if at all inferior to those of the hostile army. Twenty thousand florins had been raised by the energy of the field deputies, backed by the credit of Marlborough in the province of Groningen, and forwarded to the Duke of Wurtemberg as an instalment of his arrears. That officer, a chivalrous and high-spirited nobleman, loth to be absent from the field at

* The eagerness of Villeroi to give battle is expressed in his letter to the King, May 8. "Je suis persuadé qu'il ne saurait être qu'avantageux de se commettre à une bataille. . . . Les troupes de votre Maje-té sont belles; les bons succès que nous avons de toutes parts enflent le courage: tout doit envisager un événement heureux si l'on en vient à une affaire générale."

† Marlborough to Godolphin, May 9—20.

a time when honour was to be won, had at once pressed forward with his men, and was now within a few hours' march of head-quarters. The force under Marlborough thus constituted about sixty thousand men, and from what he knew of the quality of his troops, and perhaps also from what he had heard of the character of his antagonist, he felt little doubt as to the result of an engagement, if only an engagement could be brought about.*

Villeroi, after a brief halt at Tirlemont, crossed the Gheet, and advanced with undiminished confidence as far as Judoigne. There he heard, much to his surprise, that the Allied army was marching straight against him. Such presumption on the part of a foe he imagined to be so unequal to himself he could not comprehend. After a little debating he concluded that his adversary must have some design upon Namur. He moved on therefore a few miles nearer to that city, drew up his men in battle order, and waited with some curiosity to see what the Allies would do.†

In this position the French army was descried by Cadogan, who had been sent forward to reconnoitre, at daybreak on the morning of Whit Sunday, the 23rd of May. The general perceived that a very large proportion of the infantry was placed in the village of Ramilies, or was massed behind it. This was the centre of the position. The right wing extended to Tavières and Franquinay, two hamlets on the Mehaigne, and was composed almost entirely of those select and splendid cavalry regiments known as the household troops. The infantry on the left were merely drawn up in a single line, and formed a less numerous, though still a considerable, force. Villeroi had evidently concluded this part of his army to be unassailable, as all along the front ran the little Gheet, a puny stream in itself, but which made the ground for some distance on each side of its course so marshy as to be apparently impassable.

Marlborough and his staff reached the high ground which commanded a view of the French army about ten o'clock, a little in advance of the head of his columns. The disposition

* Coxe's Memoirs; Boyer; Burnet.

† Lamberty gives a long narrative of an intrigue with which Marlborough seems to have been occupied for obtaining possession of Namur. St. Simon; Campagne de Flandre.

of the enemy at once suggested to him the manner in which the attack should be made. If it were impossible for him to assail the French left, it was also impossible for the French left to cross the swamp and attack the Allies. Nearly every regiment, therefore, might with perfect safety be directed against the centre and right; and unless Villeroi were given time to pass round his men on the left to reinforce those divisions, the attack might be made with a considerable superiority of force.

The first thing necessary was to deceive Villeroi as to the real point against which the main strength of the Allies would be directed. As the columns came up the English and Danish infantry, who were on the right, were directed to march down towards the little Gheet as if they intended to pass the swamp. The French commander fell readily into the snare. A movement from right to left was soon discerned in the hostile army. Troops in fact were being passed from the centre and right to reinforce the left, where no attack was meditated, and where indeed no general of competent abilities would have imagined that one could be intended. As soon as Marlborough perceived the success of his stratagem, he sent orders to the troops in rear of the right wing to march round, keeping as much out of sight as possible, and to form in rear of the other columns. He himself galloped off to the centre. Not a shot had yet been fired; but this mistake of Villeroi had rendered his defeat scarcely doubtful.

It was now two hours past noon, and the battle commenced. Four Dutch battalions on the extreme left advanced against Tavières. The republicans marched on in admirable order with their muskets at the slope, and received with perfect composure and without returning a shot the galling fire from a myriad of sharpshooters, who were concealed behind the hedges. These outposts speedily fell back upon the infantry stationed in Tavières. Colonel Wertmüller, who led the Dutch, prepared to charge. Intermixed with the regiments before him, he distinguished with some surprise several bodies of men clothed in dragoon uniforms. It was afterwards learned that Villeroi, having too late become sensible of his error in weakening his infantry on the right wing, had made a hasty endeavour to

repair it by dismounting fourteen squadrons of horse and directing them to act as foot soldiers.

Meanwhile, the Duke of Wurtemberg had been stealing along the banks of the Mehaigne with the Danish cavalry. At the same moment that the Dutch infantry under Wertmüller, charged the enemy in front, the Danish horse took them in flank. The shock was irresistible. The rout of the French foot was complete. The whole force disbanded, and fled, with Wurtemberg's hussars in pursuit, towards the river. In a few moments more the Allies were in possession of Tavières, and the position of the French army had been turned.

A little to the left and in rear of Tavières were ranged in two lines the most renowned cavalry in the world, the musketeers, the gendarmerie, the body-guards of the French king. They had witnessed the discomfiture of the infantry; it was high time that they should bestir themselves, and they began accordingly to advance. Overkirk caught sight of the movement, and his trumpets sounded the charge to the large force of Dutch and German cavalry which he had under his command. In four lines, one behind another, the Allied squadrons precipitated themselves upon the French. The first line of the household troops, weakened by spaces which had been injudiciously left between the several regiments, gave way, and fled to reform behind the second. The second advanced, charged, broke in its turn the first line of Overkirk, and drove it back upon the lines in rear. So headlong was the flight of the discomfited troopers as to spread disorder through the entire body. The French cavalry upon this day of humiliation fully sustained their great reputation. Again and again they charged, and with triumphant success. The ranks of Overkirk were in utter confusion. For a time it seemed possible that the valour of the household troops, who were gallantly assisted by the Bavarian cuirassiers, would redeem the errors of their Commander-in-chief and save the day.

But the danger passed over. Marlborough came to Overkirk's relief with a powerful reinforcement. The Danes, who, after pursuing the infantry into the Mehaigne, had lost time by getting entangled in a marsh, reappeared upon the flank of the French horse. Marlborough rode forward almost alone to

try what his presence could do to restore order in the ranks of the Dutch and German cavalry. He was enveloped by a party of dragoons who were flying for their lives from the terrible musketeers, and before he could extricate himself from the panic-stricken throng, he was jostled out of the saddle. He rose not much the worse for his fall, and proceeded, with the aid of Colonel Bingfield, his equerry, to remount his horse. Before he had regained his seat a cannon-ball struck off the head of the equerry, who was holding the stirrup.

In a few minutes more the fate of the battle was decided. The Danes fell with irresistible fury upon the flank of the French horse. The Prince of Hesse Cassel charged them in front with all the fresh cavalry. Overkirk's broken squadrons were reformed, and again showed a bold front. The brave household troops, already much exhausted by their efforts, began to give way before superior numbers. But they still kept their ranks, and for a short time the Allied officers were compelled to suspend further attacks upon them to recompose their own men.

And now shouts were heard in the direction of Ramilies, and a crowd of French soldiers flying from the village made known the fact that this important position had been carried by the Allied infantry. Soon the victorious columns were perceived bending to the right, with the obvious design of getting at the yet unbroken left of the French. With the centre thus pierced, the right wing unable to keep its ground, and the left jammed in a position where it could neither assist the other divisions of the army nor receive support itself, it was now plainly time for the French commanders to think of retreating. Villeroi, at this trying season, gave abundant proofs of a fact which no one had ever doubted, that he did not want animal courage. He rode about among the cavalry, animating the men by his voice, and charging with them like a common trooper. The Elector of Bavaria, who had arrived from Brussels just before the action commenced, exerted himself with equal bravery and a great deal more coolness and professional skill. But the day had become hopeless. The force of Allied cavalry pressing upon the right was now overwhelming. Seven squadrons boasting the proud designation of "invincibles," were chased by

the Danish hussars into a marsh, and cut to pieces. To bring off the artillery and troops on the left wing was now the main anxiety of the French commanders. The retreat was commenced in good order; but terrible disasters, chiefly attributable to Villeroi's want of foresight, were yet in store for the vanquished. The ammunition carts and baggage waggons had been drawn up in rear of the army. Such an impediment was, with an enemy in hot pursuit, sufficient to throw the ranks into confusion. A panic began, to which some English infantry regiments gave the crowning stroke. They had hitherto remained as inactive as their opponents on the other side of the little Gheet. But encouraged by the sight of the enemy in retreat, they now decided to push through the swamp. The passage was effected without great difficulty, and they made after the retiring foe. In a short time a small body of cavalry which accompanied them overtook the famous regiment *du roi* which formed the rear-guard, and made prisoners of the whole body.

The final charge of the battle was made by General Wood against the Bavarian cuirassiers, with whom the Elector was making his last stand in hopes of covering the retreat of the left wing. The Bavarians fled, leaving the infantry to their fate. Several regiments disbanded, and took to their heels. The greater part of the French army was, however, already some distance on the road to Louvain, and order was tolerably well maintained in the ranks. The English cavalry, which, having been brought late into action, was much the freshest, was foremost in pursuit. Cannon, baggage, muskets, swords, standards, kettledrums, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Prisoners were taken in great numbers. Marlborough, anxious to prevent the enemy from regaining their stronghold, made his troops march throughout the whole night. Early on the day after the battle, the Allied army was in sight of Louvain, having performed a distance of some fifteen miles from the field of action.*

* I should imagine perfect accuracy in relating the events of a battle to be impossible. The authorities I have followed and endeavoured to reconcile are the Lettres Historiques; the Letters of Marlborough and other general officers in the Despatches; Lamberty and Coxe's Memoirs; Boyer; Burnet; Kane's Campaigns; Campagne de Flandre; St. Simon; the valuable Criticisms of Feuquières.

The victory was complete. The direct loss inflicted upon the enemy was not indeed so heavy as it had been at Blenheim. Five thousand men were made prisoners; four thousand more were left dead on the field. Yet nine thousand men very imperfectly represented the losses sustained by the Elector and Villeroi.* It was computed that nearly as many more deserted their standards. Many of the soldiers had been raised in the Netherlands, and thought it prudent, at a time when the prospects of the French army were so gloomy, to return for awhile to their homes. Out of more than sixty thousand men whom Villeroi had led forth from the camp of Louvain, barely forty thousand could now be mustered. The energy shown by the Allies in following up their victory had spread universal confusion and alarm. The officers, who had but a few hours since participated in the confidence of their chief, were now in utter despondency. A hurried conference was held in the market-place of the city by torchlight. It was decided that, in the present condition of the army, the camp was untenable, and that the only prospect of safety lay in getting the troops, with all possible speed, behind the canal of Brussels.

This great victory was purchased by the Allies at a singularly small cost of life, a circumstance attributable no doubt to the vigour with which the attack upon Ramilies was conducted, which allowed the batteries posted for the defence of the village but little time to play. The loss in killed and wounded amounted to no more than three thousand six hundred men.† Contrary to expectation, the Dutch cavalry, which sustained the severest shocks, proved not to have suffered disproportionately to the rest of the army. Argyle was in the action, and received several wounds, but no Englishman of any note fell. Overkirk narrowly escaped being assassinated by a treacherous prisoner, a Bavarian officer, whom he had too generously permitted to retain his sword. The Prince of Hesse

* In the Campagne de Flandre the losses of the French army are stated at two thousand dead and wounded (a statement obviously under the mark) and six thousand prisoners. It is admitted, however, that the desertion was considerable, especially among the Walloon regiments, who were in their own country. According to a letter of General Wood given in Boyer, both the Elector and Villeroi had a narrow escape of being made prisoners.

† This is according to the list printed at the Hague and given by Boyer and Lamberty.

Cassel, one of the most zealous officers of the Confederate army, was among the slain. Almost the first thought of Marlborough after the battle was for the family of his unfortunate equerry. "Poor Bingfield was killed as he was holding my stirrup," he wrote to Godolphin; "I am told he leaves his wife and mother in a bad condition." Anne promptly settled a pension upon the widow.

Upon reaching the Dyle, Marlborough found that the retreat of the French had spared him the pain of further sacrificing the lives of his men by forcing the passage. Louvain was at once secured by a detachment, and the army pushed on for Brussels. In a short time, however, a deputation arrived from that city. The French, they reported, had evacuated Brussels with such precipitation that they had not even taken with them the supplies contained in their magazines; and the authorities were now anxious to make conditions with the Allies. A deputation from Malines reached the camp only a few hours later to profess the readiness of that city also to receive the conquerors. Thus three of the most populous and wealthy emporiums of commerce in the Netherlands were the immediate fruits of the victory. A declaration was at once issued in the name of the Queen and of the States-general. The Allied army, it was announced, presented itself, not as an enemy, but as the liberator of the people from the French yoke. All persons who loyally submitted to the government of Charles III. might rely upon being protected in the enjoyment of their property, their religion, and all the privileges they had under his late Majesty Charles II.

To the citizens of Brussels the entrance of the Allied chiefs into their city was a most welcome spectacle. They had good grounds for rejoicing at the turn events had taken. Whether their sovereign, whom they would perhaps never see, was of Austrian or French extraction, was indeed a circumstance of little moment to them in itself. Doubtless the kind of ruler that best suited the industrious people of the Netherlands was an indolent and careless prince, who concerned himself little about their affairs, and left them to virtual independence. But the government of Philip, there was only too much reason to apprehend, would be the government of Louis; and beneath

the blighting frown of a monarch who hated the very name of liberty, and whose power to tyrannize was almost unlimited, the concessions and privileges that had been acquired under a succession of feeble princes seemed destined to extinction. An Austrian sovereign, on the other hand, would be unable, if he had the inclination, to oppress his distant subjects. His poverty would prevent him from deluging the provinces with soldiers if a passion to extinguish liberty should take possession of his understanding. He would be in truth little better than a monarch by sufferance, compelled by his position to meet the wishes and consult the interests of those he governed. While his behaviour was exemplary, and the Queen, the States-general, and the Emperor had large armies in the neighbourhood to support him, it would certainly be wise to acknowledge his title. But when the war ceased and the armies disappeared, the yoke might easily be thrown off the moment it became troublesome.

Actuated by these considerations the population of Brabant received the invading army with great cordiality. The feeling of good-will was heightened by the excellent conduct of the troops. Marlborough had, upon entering the Spanish Netherlands, issued a proclamation that all marauders would be punished with death, and that the officers of the regiments to which they belonged, would be made responsible for the value of what the thieves stole. A few days afterwards five soldiers were hanged for what, to people accustomed to the heavy-handed proceedings of the French, might appear the trifling crime of stealing a few chickens.* But the effect of this rigid enforcement of honesty was to open to the Allies a plentiful market. The peasantry flocked into the camp with provisions. The citizens of Brussels, during the two days that the army remained in their neighbourhood, strolled about among the tents, comparing the quiet soldierly bearing, the bright accoutrements, and the perfect discipline of the Allied troops, with the unclean, swaggering, disorderly hordes that had just quitted them.

The army being somewhat refreshed by these two days of repose, now resumed its pursuit of the enemy. It was reported

* Lettres Historiques.

that the Elector, with the greatest part of the discomfited troops, was then encamped close to Ghent, and that the greatest dejection and disorganisation prevailed in the ranks. The Allies pushed on rapidly. They reached Ghent to hear that the French had evacuated the city on the previous evening. The citizens seemed beside themselves with joy at their deliverance. When Cadogan advanced to summon the city, a party appeared on the ramparts, and cheered for the Allies. The magistrates received Marlborough at the gate, and presented to him a silver basin, containing three golden keys, tied together by an embroidered ribbon. Ghent was hardly secured before a detachment was on its way to Bruges. That city also, which had been abandoned, submitted with alacrity. Oudenarde, a strongly fortified town, surrendered a few days afterwards, the citizens having risen and expelled the French commandant.

Cadogan was now sent to summon Antwerp, and Marlborough awaited the result with some anxiety, for the siege of this immense fortress would, he apprehended, delay him for a whole month. The garrison consisted of eleven battalions; but of this number six were fortunately of the troops of Spain. The citizens were to a man in favour of the new sovereign proposed to them by the Allies; and it soon appeared that the Marquis of Terracina, who had been appointed governor by Philip, was himself not averse to transferring his loyalty to the Austrian prince. The only terms for which he stipulated were that the French battalions should have liberty to retire; and these terms were readily accorded. The keys of Antwerp, which had never been parted with since hunger had compelled the citizens to surrender them to the Duke of Parma a hundred and twenty-one years before, were now given up without a shot having been fired.

A fortnight only had passed since the battle of Ramilies, and the Allies were already in possession of Louvain, Brussels, Malines, Ghent, Bruges, Oudenarde, and Antwerp, besides some inferior places. Marlborough himself was at a loss to account for the extraordinary dejection into which had fallen the soldiers of that monarch who had been the terror of Europe from his earliest recollection. To take so many towns within

a space so short, seemed to him more like a dream than reality.* He had commenced the campaign hardly three weeks back in utter despondency, without a hope of being able to effect anything considerable. And now the whole Netherlands lay open to him. He might reckon that before another month elapsed, he would have at his disposal a hundred thousand men, the largest army that had ever been led by an Englishman. Since the battle his ranks had been swollen by deserters from the French, German, and Spanish adventurers who, having no interest in the cause, preferred to be on the winning to the losing side. He had, moreover, prevailed upon Heinsius to use his influence with the States-general that the large garrisons which that body had, with an eye to future interests, placed in the towns captured during former years, might join his standard now that all chance of the French resuming the offensive was at an end. The Prussians would soon be with him. The news of the great victory had operated very favourably on the mind of Frederick, who, before receiving it, had been evidently debating whether he should not break off altogether with Allies who treated him, as he imagined, so disrespectfully.

Godolphin strongly urged upon his friend at this conjuncture not to let slip the opportunity of destroying the harbour and fortifications of Dunkirk. This port had been an object of terror to an entire generation of English merchants. The swarms of privateers which issued from it in time of war rendered all commerce with foreign countries impossible except when the trading vessels were protected by a powerful escort. The losses sustained by our countrymen since 1702 were computed already to approach a million sterling. But Marlborough judged that the capture of Ostend, Nieuport, and Ypres, in all which towns the French had garrisons, must precede any attempt on Dunkirk. Troops were accordingly sent to form the siege of Ostend. The engineers, after a few days' work, succeeded in overcoming the difficulties of digging trenches

* Marlborough to the Duchess, May 20—31. In a letter of May 16—27, he says, "As we had no council of war before this battle, so I hope to have none this whole campaign." "The consequences of this victory," he says elsewhere, "will be much greater than that of Blenheim, as we have the whole summer before us."

and erecting batteries in the sand. A fire was then opened upon the town which set half its houses in a blaze. The counterscarp was carried by assault, and at length, after undergoing a siege of seventeen days, the governor capitulated. By that time, however, the city of Dunkirk had been rendered by the vigilance of Louis almost impregnable.

CHAPTER XII.

At no time during his reign were the firmness and energy of Louis so creditably displayed as after the defeat of his principal army in Brabant. An ordinary courier from Villeroi brought the news to Versailles, without being able to add one word of information as to the losses the army had sustained, the condition of the survivors, or what the Marshal intended to do in the emergency. One other letter indeed the same courier brought from Villeroi. It was addressed to the Marshal's friend, Dangeau, who had a son in the army, and contained the information that, although the young man had received a sword-cut in the engagement, he was doing remarkably well. Day after day succeeded, and brought the King no further intelligence. The anxiety to learn who had fallen and who was safe, whether the demoralization of the army was as complete as rumour asserted it to be, and whether the Allies were marching on the frontiers of the kingdom, was expressed on every face at Court. Yet the master of France still presented to the excited throng the same countenance of dignified serenity. At length, however, the agony of suspense in which he was kept became so intolerable that he determined to send off Chamillart to ascertain the truth. That Minister found the army at Courtrai, had an interview with Villeroi, who was in an exceedingly bad temper, with the Elector, who vehemently complained that his colleague would listen to no advice from him, made a hasty review of the troops, and returned to lay the result of his investigations before Louis.*

It was plain to the whole world that never had a general

* St. Simon. Just before receiving the news of the defeat of his army in the Netherlands intelligence had reached the King of the retreat of Philip from before Barcelona. Particulars of that disaster will be related in this chapter.

been more to blame than Villeroi. He had acted in direct disobedience to his orders. He had on the field of battle turned a deaf ear to the suggestions of officers who had twice his own experience in war. It was even alleged that he had chosen his position upon the very ground which the judicious Luxemburg had, two years before, in his own presence pointed out as improper for the drawing up of an army.* But Louis loved Villeroi with a constancy that nothing could change. To maintain him in command would indeed have been not only unreasonable, but even impossible; for the troops ascribed their defeat solely to him, and were loud in their expressions of contempt. Yet he could not bring himself to issue any fiat which might give his favourite pain. He wrote a letter to the Marshal with his own hand. He was too unfortunate in war, he said gently. He counselled him therefore as a friend to ask permission to retire from the service: he should be received, when he returned home, with more affection than ever by a sovereign who would never forget his making such a sacrifice to the interests of the state. The manner in which Villeroi responded to this appeal, the more touching as it proceeded from one who was generally the most austere and exacting of masters, showed that vanity and presumption were in him qualities as enduring as friendship in Louis. His Majesty, he said, might dismiss him if he pleased, but he would not by a voluntary resignation admit that he had been to blame in the matter. The people of Paris, who were perhaps strangers to those charms of dress and bearing which made Villeroi immaculate in the eyes of fine ladies and of some fine gentlemen, but who were doubtless no strangers to the character he bore in the army, were disposed to be less delicate in their treatment of him. A mob assembled in front of his hotel, and was only prevented from forcing an entrance and destroying the mansion by the appearance of the archers of the royal guard.†

It was, however, indispensably necessary that the soldiers should have a general in whom they placed confidence, and Louis could think of no person better qualified to restore his affairs in the Netherlands than Vendôme. He was indeed fully sensible that matters were assuming a serious complexion in

* St. Simon; Feuquières. † Lettres Historiques.

Italy, and that fatal consequences might ensue if at this critical time his troops in that country were deprived of their general. But a commander of first-rate abilities, it seemed to the King, was now more urgently required in the Netherlands than anywhere else, and to Vendôme accordingly Chamillart conveyed the wishes of his Majesty. The question now arose of appointing a competent successor to the very difficult and important post from which Vendôme was to be withdrawn. The Marshal himself represented that Berwick was the only commander who was equal to the situation, but Louis decided that Berwick could not well be spared at this conjuncture from Spain. An application was then made to Villars, but Villars showed so much repugnance to be transferred from the Rhine that the King thought it best to accept his excuses. "I am not surprised at his refusal," was Vendôme's commentary to Chamillart upon this transaction. "A man who is in the habit of making two hundred thousand crowns a campaign does not like changing to a country where there is nothing but hard blows to gain."* In this manner could one marshal express himself concerning a brother marshal in a letter intended for the perusal of their joint master. The truth is that among the hard-hearted and shameless men who executed the iniquitous and pitiless method of warfare originated by Louis, Villars, clever, brave, and energetic as he was, had contrived to establish a pre-eminent reputation as a harpy. The other marshals affected at least to be honest. Their maxim, however they may have violated it in secret, was that no more money should be wrung from the helpless people of a hostile district than was necessary for the support of their armies. But Villars had no scruple in avowing that he often levied contributions entirely for his own advantage. He was sometimes rallied by his friends upon his rapacity. He replied carelessly that he could see no harm in enriching himself at the expense of his Majesty's enemies, and Louis himself seems to have considered the answer satisfactory.†

The King then turned to Marsin, and ordered him to repair

* Vendôme to Chamillart, July 10; Campagne d'Italie.

† Memoires de Villars. St. Simon is never weary of expatiating upon his rapacity.

to Italy. Marsin was a man of amiable character, but was thought to be so deficient in firmness, and had enjoyed so little good fortune, that Vendôme apprehended that the soldiers would not pay him sufficient deference. He suggested, therefore, that the Marshal should have the aid of a prince of the blood, whose commands the men would not presume to question, and Louis signified his approval of this suggestion by appointing his nephew and son-in-law, the Duke of Orleans, then in his thirty-second year, to the highest post in the army of Italy.

By the end of the first week of August Vendôme had reached Valenciennes, and had assumed the command of his Majesty's troops in the Netherlands. He found the Allies besieging Menin, a fortified town on the Lys, near Courtrai. To drive them from this enterprise was his first project; but the discouragement prevailing in the army and the strong objections entertained by Louis to his taking any step that might induce another battle, determined him to adopt a more cautious system of warfare. He accordingly threw up a line of entrenchments, and massed his men behind it with the object of preventing the enemy from extending his conquests to the south and west. In this position the French army continued during the remainder of the campaign.

Menin having fallen, a detachment was sent by Marlborough to besiege Dendermond. This fortress, situated at the confluence of the Scheldt and the Dender, was so entirely surrounded by water, and the adjacent plain could be so easily inundated, that the inhabitants were fond of boasting that it could be taken only by an army of ducks. It was, however, poorly garrisoned, and Marlborough had taken such good care to secure the dykes which held in restraint the waters of the Dender, that the town was given up in five days.* Ath, near the sources of the same river, was next besieged, but made no long resistance. It was yet but the commencement of October. The weather, after a succession of rains, had again become fine, and Marlborough thought that there would be time, before the winter set in, to reduce the strong and very important town of

* Marlborough to Godolphin, September 9—20. He says, "That place could never have been taken but by the hand of God, which gave us seven weeks without any rain."

Mons. But from this enterprise he was deterred by the conduct of the States-general, conduct which requires explanation.

During the last two months the ardour with which that body had at first entered upon the work of subduing the Spanish Netherlands had been sensibly cooling, very much to the mortification of the Commander-in-Chief, who felt that now, while the enemy was suffering under the shock occasioned by the loss of a great battle, was the time for pushing operations with the utmost vigour, and extending his conquests. The Dutch, in truth, were disappointed and disgusted at the policy which the Emperor and his brother, the titular King of Spain, seemed bent on pursuing with regard to the captured towns. By the treaty of alliance between England, Holland, and the Empire, it had been agreed that one of the objects of the war should be the recovery of the Spanish Netherlands, and that this territory should serve as a barrier between the Republic and France. But there had been no explanation between the contracting parties as to what was intended by the term of "barrier." For some time before the entrance of the French forces into the Netherlands the Dutch had, with the permission of the King of Spain, maintained garrisons in some of the Spanish towns. They might therefore have reasonably expected, if the confederacy were blessed with a fair measure of success, to be at least restored to a footing as good as that they had before the commencement of hostilities. But the war had been successful beyond the hopes of the most sanguine. Nearly the entirety of the Spanish Netherlands had been wrested from the grasp of France; the French armies were no longer objects of terror; Louis was in despair, and was endeavouring to propitiate the statesmen of Holland by intimating his consent that the Netherlands should be erected into an independent State. The ambition of the republicans naturally rose to a high pitch after the victory of Ramilies. They really seem to have entertained hopes of annexing to their own territory those wealthy provinces, to the rescue of which from France their own arms had so greatly contributed. In each of the captured towns they planted a strong garrison. Dutch statesmen entered into a kind of competition with the persons to whom the Austrian princes had confided the government of the recovered Nether-

lands, began to issue decrees and regulations, and, in short, to play the master in a manner which astonished and alarmed the citizens. The latter had, on the understanding that things were to revert to the state in which they were during the reign of the late King of Spain, thrown open their gates, and welcomed the Allies as liberators. They now began to apprehend that the yoke of the French would be succeeded by the yoke of the Dutch, and the Imperial court was besieged by their complaints.*

To the Emperor and his brother Charles the interference of the Dutch in the affairs of the Spanish Netherlands seemed nothing but impertinence. They perceived, however, the advisability of being cautious in displaying their anger. They could not afford to quarrel with Allies who were so manfully fighting their battles. Under these circumstances it occurred to Joseph to appoint Marlborough to the government of the Netherlands. The great general, he knew, was immensely popular in the Spanish provinces; he would probably, moreover, be supported by his own Queen, who would be flattered by so great a distinction being paid to one of her subjects. His government therefore would be a strong one, and his own interest might seem to lie in maintaining against all encroachers the rights of his Spanish Majesty. Such a mark of gratitude, too, was not less than the due of the man whose genius and zeal had done so much for the House of Austria, who had metamorphosed Charles from a merely titular into an actual sovereign, and who had delivered the Empire from an enemy which threatened its ruin. The King of Spain had, before his departure from Vienna, left with his relations blank powers to be used in cases of emergency. Of these Joseph now availed himself. He despatched to Marlborough a patent constituting him governor of the Netherlands.†

Marlborough was delighted with the prospect thus opened to him. For the honour of the post he probably cared little. He well knew that his days would be passed more happily with his wife and family at St. Albans than in exercising the functions

* Lamberty; Coxe's Memoirs.

† Marlborough to Godolphin, June 18, July 9. The patent was dated June 13.

of a ruler in a foreign country. But the place was worth sixty thousand pounds a year, and this sum would make a pleasant addition to the enormous revenues he and his duchess were already deriving from their numerous appointments. He communicated therefore with Godolphin, and requested him to ask the advice of his friends in England. They were unanimous in counselling him to accept the position. They seem to have considered that, not only would his government be acceptable and beneficial to the people of the Netherlands, but that it offered the best chance for an equitable arbitration on the questions which had arisen between the Dutch and the Austrian princes. "It is one of the happiest thoughts," said Somers, "that ever emanated from the Imperial counsels."*

Encouraged by this approbation, Marlborough now ventured to impart the fact of his appointment to Heinsius. He anticipated that some objections would be raised; but with all his knowledge of this statesman and of the views of the leading men in Holland, he was unprepared for the tempest of rage, jealousy, and disappointment which burst out when the patent became known. The Dutch, in truth, saw in it the overthrow of all the splendid hopes that had been rising in their minds. The signs of dissatisfaction were so decided and unequivocal that Marlborough, whose leading wish was to keep on good terms with the States-general, saw the absolute necessity of declining the glittering prize which had been offered him. He would take no steps in the matter, he assured Heinsius, but with the advice of the States. They might depend upon it that he preferred their friendship infinitely before his own interests.†

But the feeling of irritation and disappointment excited by the conduct of the Austrian princes remained. The position of the Dutch was, in truth, not altogether satisfactory. As matters stood, what security had they that, when Charles had, by their assistance, been placed in possession of the Netherlands, the barrier question would receive the least attention from him? They might find after all that they had been sacrificing their soldiers

* Godolphin to Marlborough, June 24, July 5.

† Marlborough to Godolphin, July 1—12; to Heinsius, July 3—14; to Godolphin, July 6—17.

and spending their money for the sole advantage of an ungrateful prince. It was useless to proceed farther without some guarantee that their labour would not be thrown away. They began to raise all kind of frivolous objections to Marlborough's designs. It was with great difficulty they could be persuaded to join in the siege of Ath, and such a host of impediments was conjured up against the siege of Mons that the Commander-in-Chief was compelled to bring the campaign to a close.* Early in November the troops separated. The English were placed in Ghent, the Danes in Bruges, the Dutch were distributed in the form of garrisons among the towns of Brabant, and the Prussians quartered themselves between the Meuse and the Rhine.

While the Allied troops were engaged in the siege of Ath, the cheering intelligence had been received that Prince Eugene and the Duke of Saxony had obtained a decisive victory over the French before Turin; that Marsin had been killed, and that the routed army had separated into two parts, each part taking an opposite direction. The pleasure afforded to Marlborough by this success of the man whom the world accounted the rival of his fame, and of whom malicious and ill-informed persons were fond of affirming that he was exceedingly jealous, was expressed in a letter he wrote to his wife. "It is impossible for me," he said, "to tell you the joy this victory has given me. I do not only esteem, but I really love that Prince."† His expectation was that this additional blow would so break down the pride of Louis, that almost any terms the Allies might see fit to impose upon him would not be rejected. It is necessary to relate briefly the events which led to the overthrow of the French king's affairs in Italy.

Early in the year the first instalment of the loan of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds reached Vienna, and Eugene, cheered by the promise which Marlborough had given him, that ten thousand additional troops should be despatched to his assistance, set off to resume the command of his force in Italy. He reached the Lake of Guarda to find a considerable detachment of his men flying before Vendôme, who had come upon them by surprise, while entrenched near the village of Cal-

* Marlborough to Godolphin, September 27, October 8.
† Marlborough to the Duchess, September 26, October 7.

cinato. Unable at present to make head against the great superiority of numbers the French possessed, the Prince retired behind the Adige into the Ferrarese, and there patiently awaited the arrival of reinforcements. Vendôme, on his side, sent home a glowing account of his victory, which greatly cheered his master, and was celebrated with the usual honours in the churches of France. He made such a disposition of his troops as would, he flattered himself, shut up his adversary during all the rest of the campaign, and then (such was the nature of this singular being) dismissed all military cares from his mind, and betook himself to the enjoyments of his table and his bed.*

In the meantime La Feuillade had, by the express direction of Louis, commenced the long-threatened siege of Turin. The preparations upon each side had been immense. The Duke of Savoy, after having employed many months in strengthening the defences of his capital, in replenishing its magazines, in drilling the citizens into a state of discipline which would render them valuable auxiliaries, and in mining the adjacent country, took up his position across the Po with an army of fifteen thousand men. On the other hand, the French army was supplied with every requisite which a despotic king and a minister, who was father-in-law to the general, could furnish, and it numbered forty thousand men. Yet misgivings had been freely expressed at the French court about the enterprise. Vauban, who, having himself constructed the citadel and principal works of Turin, was well qualified to give advice, concerning the siege, thought that the attacking force, large as it was, was insufficient. But even more ominous than the probable insufficiency of the French in numbers, was the fact that their commander was almost a novice in the art of war. La Feuillade had done little more than complete his lines of circumvallation when a messenger reached him with the intelligence of the overthrow of Villeroi in the Netherlands, and of the intended exchange of Vendôme for the Duke of Orleans and Marsin. The same person, however, brought the King's orders to continue the siege. Cost what it might, it was evident that Louis was determined to have Turin. His passions were, in truth, more strongly excited against the Duke of Savoy than against

* St. Simon.

any other potentate who had entered into the Confederacy. The revolt of this prince, bound by the closest domestic ties to the fortunes of the House of Bourbon, he looked upon as an unnatural and unpardonable crime. He had already determined what his punishment should be. It should be the same as that which his predecessors had inflicted upon the Duke of Lorraine,—to be driven from his territory, and forced to earn his living as a soldier of fortune.

La Feuillade, however, as a minister of vengeance, proved unequal to the work that was expected from him. Annoyed by the interruptions to the siege occasioned by the Duke, he advanced against the Savoyard camp, whereupon Victor Amadeus prudently retired to the mountains. It should seem that the Frenchman was haunted by a desire to obtain possession of the Duke's person, for he pursued him with one-third of his army, leaving his subordinates to continue the siege with the remainder. His cunning adversary employed every artifice to tempt him on which a thorough knowledge of the country could suggest, now exposing himself to capture, and then vanishing from sight to reappear in another quarter. For a whole month La Feuillade kept up his chase after the tantalising phantom, and then, mad with vexation, returned to find, as he might have expected, that the siege had made but little progress in his absence. He had not returned above a week before the Duke was in his old camp again, passing succours into Turin and obstructing the siege in every conceivable way. Once more he marched against him, and once more the Duke retreated. But La Feuillade had lost invaluable moments in this vain chase. Eugene, meanwhile, had been all activity. He had crossed the Adige in spite of all the precautions Vendôme had taken to coop him up in the Ferrarese. He had marched rapidly towards Piedmont. On the 22nd of August he effected a junction with the Duke of Savoy near Asti. Upon the same day the army of Orleans and Marsin fell back upon the besieging force under the walls of Turin, and instantly began to entrench itself.*

The opposing forces were of about equal strength, each army containing upwards of sixty thousand men. The French made one last and desperate attempt to carry the city by

* Lettres Historiques; Campagne d'Italie; St. Simon; Botta.

assault. They were repulsed at all points by the defenders, who fought with the hopeful courage of men confident of a speedy and glorious termination of their sufferings. A difference of opinion now arose between Orleans and Marsin as to the course they should pursue. The Prince, who was not without spirit, though sadly wanting in experience, was for sallying out of the entrenchments and offering battle. This plan Marsin very properly judged to be extremely foolish under the circumstances, and insisted that the army should remain where it was. The Prince persisted, and a throng of courtly simpletons pretended to applaud the suggestion, until Marsin, losing patience, drew from his pocket a letter signed by Louis, who directed his nephew to conform, in case of a disagreement, to the advice of his military tutor.* It was with an agony of grief and mortification that Orleans learned for the first time his true position in the army of which he had fancied himself Commander-in-Chief. A few days of angry recriminations succeeded, and then the catastrophe came. On the morning of the 7th of September the Allied columns made their appearance. Undaunted by a terrible fire of artillery, they marched steadily up to the entrenchments. The left wing was led on by Eugene, the centre by the Duke of Savoy; and after incurring one or two bloody repulses, each of these brave and resolute men made good their entrance. A few moments of wild and desultory combat followed. A portion of the French foot had been posted where it could be of no use; the cavalry regiments showed their usual spirit, but the disorder prevailing throughout the entire army was so great that the fate of the day was speedily decided. Marsin, mortally wounded, was made prisoner. Orleans, who was slightly wounded, attempted to take the command, but could make no one obey him. La Feuillade, according to one account, could do nothing but run about tearing his hair. The flight soon became general, and in different directions. The greater part of the French made for Pinerolo, abandoning nearly all the artillery and stores which had been accumulated for the siege; and towards evening Victor Amadeus, side by side with Eugene, re-entered

* St. Simon; the Duke of Orleans to the King; Marsin to Chamillart, August 31.

his capital in triumph amid the deafening acclamations of his subjects.*

From the Netherlands and from Italy the armies of Louis had been driven with ignominy such as, before 1706, few men would have imagined as ever likely to be the fortune of troops so renowned for their courage and discipline, and sprung from a nation so pre-eminently martial in its tastes and habits as the French. But the victories of Ramilies and Turin were not all the marvels which signalized this eventful year. On the side of Spain the probability had been at one time great that the end of the Allies would have been triumphantly attained by the coronation of Charles at Madrid, and by Philip being forced to abandon a kingdom in which his grandfather maintained him at the price of ruining and humiliating his own.

The close of 1705 had found the Austrian Charles in possession, through the genius of Peterborough, of the city of Barcelona, of the entire province of Catalonia, and of great part of the neighbouring provinces of Valencia and Aragon. At the Court of Philip, in Madrid, the greatest alarm prevailed; for every post brought news of the submission of some new town to the invaders, of the devotion which the inhabitants evinced for Charles, and of the rapid spread of the contagion of rebellion. So formidable appeared the danger that orders were sent to the French troops on the Portuguese frontier to march against the revolted provinces. Their withdrawal reduced the army opposed to Galway to a mere handful of ragged and disorderly Spaniards; and great was the expectation excited through Europe that the English commander would make use of his opportunity, and march on Madrid, which was almost bare of defenders.†

The quick glance of Peterborough at once estimated the splendid chance which offered itself. "I would have your Majesty," he wrote to Charles, "take a resolution as extraordinary as that which placed you in possession of Barcelona.

* Lettres Historiques; Lamberty; Hohendorf to the States-general; Eugene to Marlborough; Orleans to Chamillart; Campagne d'Italie; St. Simon; Botta; Boyer; Burnet.

† Lettres Historiques. The inhabitants of Castile and Madrid showed their usual lazy nonchalance. The only people who displayed much animation in the cause of Philip were the superior clergy.

Put yourself on board ship without the loss of a moment; sail round to Portugal; and from thence, at the head of five-and-twenty thousand men, make a dash for your capital."* The advice was rejected. The heavy German counsellors about Charles seem to have formed the conclusion that Peterborough was little better than a madman. A great effort, they had heard, was about to be made by Philip to recover those portions of his dominions he had lost. They concluded, therefore, that it was not only the interest but the duty of his Majesty to stay and defend what he had won.

By January a considerable force of French and Spaniards had been collected at Saragossa. It was entrusted, however, to the unskilful guidance of Tessé. The Marshal permitted and even encouraged his men to exercise barbarities upon the simple peasantry of the neighbourhood which confirmed in their minds all the horrible tales which they had heard concerning the French. By an ill-judged display of pride he, moreover, contrived to set against him the citizens of Saragossa, distinguished from the most ancient times as the fiercest and haughtiest people of the Peninsula. His staff was attacked by a crowd; he fled into the house of the Viceroy of Aragon for protection; and when the tumult was over was with difficulty persuaded to countermand an order which he had sent in his fright to the officers in charge of the troops directing them to march upon the city, and punish its inhabitants for the crime of insulting a marshal of France.† Louis himself suggested the scheme of operations for the Franco-Spanish army. He insisted that the first necessity was to lay siege to Barcelona. That city recaptured, it would be easy work to trample out the embers of the rebellion. A French fleet from Toulon should assist in its reduction. Philip, at the earnest recommendation of his Ministers, resolved to place himself at the head of the besieging force. There was, however, so little money in the royal treasury, that he was forced to wait for two months before an equipage could be provided which would not derogate too much from the dignity of a king of Spain, when he condescended to make war in person.

Upon the 1st of April a French fleet of twenty-six ships of

* Peterborough to Charles, March 13. † Lettres Historiques.

war and fourteen galleys appeared off Barcelona, under the command of Toulouse; and three days afterwards the city was invested on the land side by Philip and Tessé, with about twenty thousand men. Little had been done since the capture of Barcelona to repair its defences. The garrison, moreover, had been suffered to dwindle to four thousand regular troops, who were necessarily distributed between the city itself and the fortified hill of Monjuich. Success of an extraordinary and unexpected kind had, in fact, turned the heads of the German counsellors. They fancied themselves already governors of Spain. They had imported into Barcelona all the cumbrous etiquette of the Court of Vienna. Around the young King, whose authority was not worth a month's purchase, went on the same squabbles about precedence which paralyzed the counsels of the Imperial Cabinet.*

Peterborough was absent. Between these conceited punctilious courtiers and himself there had been a feud from the beginning. The fiery Englishman felt that he had rendered great services to his Majesty, and was mortified at finding his advice constantly rejected by a parcel of selfish and ignorant men, who took upon themselves to order him about upon enterprises which, if he submitted to undertake them, would, he considered, bring the cause to ruin. His activity during the last six months had been perfectly marvellous. He had been hardly a day, indeed, hardly an hour, out of the saddle. While Charles and his Germans were reposing in Barcelona, he was scouring the Province of Valencia from one end to the other. He had turned a few foot soldiers into a regiment of dragoons, and made this single regiment perform the work of fifty squadrons. Such hard riders were both master and men, that the public imagination was deluded into a belief that the English were ten times as numerous as they really were. A large Spanish force fled before them under the impression that the few pursuers they could see were only the advanced guard of an army. Governors of towns were often frightened into throwing open their gates to half a score of impudent troopers. Peterborough's first design, upon hearing of the threatened siege of Barcelona, was to return to the side of Charles. He

* Boyer.

knew, however, that should he abandon the city of Valencia, it would be at once besieged by a force not far off, and the inhabitants besought him in moving terms not to leave them to the mercy of the French. He determined, therefore, to stay where he was.*

The walls of Barcelona were weak, and the garrison was scanty. But the citizens were, as a rule, faithful to the sovereign whose cause they had espoused; and the peasants of Catalonia who, having committed themselves to a rebellion, had good reason to strive for its success, fought for King Charles after their fashion. They beset the French camp so closely as to render it difficult for Philip and Tessé to procure either forage or provisions from the country. The besieging force was thus reduced to depend mainly upon the fleet for support. In rather more than three weeks from the investment, however, Monjuich was carried; and, masters of this advantageous position, the French looked forward with confidence to the speedy reduction of the city.

Within the walls there was great dejection. For the citizens had little mercy to expect from the sovereign against whom thay had rebelled; and the French dragoons they had been taught to regard as robbers, assassins, and ravishers. In these straits the young King discovered a degree of spirit and energy which few men expected he possessed. He was assiduous in his visits to the soldiers' quarters, and spared neither smiles nor promises to confirm his defenders in their fidelity. The non-military part of the population he comforted with stories of saints and angels who had appeared to him in his dreams, and assured him of deliverance.† That amount of animal courage, which, at seasons of unusual excitement, raises its possessor somewhat above himself, was, in truth, not wanting in Charles. Had his conduct continued to be of a piece with his conduct during the siege of Barcelona, it is no unreasonable inference that he would have succeeded in his mission, and become King of Spain in reality. But the time of personal danger passed, he sank back again into his habitual langour and listlessness. It was upon England that the hopes of those who were incre-

* Freind's Conduct of Peterborough.
† Mémoires de Noailles; Boyer; Burnet.

dulous as to the powers of saints and angels, mainly rested; and it was known that a fleet was on its way from Lisbon. By the 7th of May the French, who had kept up an incessant fire both from Monjuich and the sea, had made two practicable breaches in the walls, and the fate of Barcelona hung upon a thread. A night of torturing anxiety was passed by the citizens. The next morning, when they looked forth, the hostile ships had disappeared, and in a few hours the Allied fleet sailed into their harbour with reinforcements of troops sufficient to deliver them from all dread of danger.

Sir John Leake, whose arrival at this critical time saved the city, had reached Altea ten days before, with thirty English and Dutch ships of war. He had received letters from Charles informing him of his imminent danger; but the Admiral was one of those men, who, however brave in subordinate positions, seem to be paralyzed by the responsibility involved in a separate command. Fearing that Toulouse might prove too strong for him, he waited several days for the squadron of Sir George Byng. When he was joined by that Admiral it fell calm, and three days more were lost. Fortunately a wind at length sprang up, and he advanced towards Barcelona with ships enough to overwhelm not only the fleet of Toulouse, but the whole French navy. Just a little before coming in sight of the city, one of his men-of-war was hailed by a fishing-boat. A gentleman in uniform clambered up the ship's side, sprang on the deck, and ordered the captain to hoist an admiral's flag. It was the omnipresent Earl of Peterborough.*

Philip's army continued in its position for three days longer, and then marched off during the night with such precipitation that when the Barcelonese visited the deserted camp, it was found that all the artillery and ammunition, all the sick and wounded men, and all the stores of provisions and clothing had been left behind. The warlike peasants, or Miquelets, as they were termed, hung upon the rear of the retreating foe. The latter turned to bay, and there was some sharp fighting. While the combatants were engaged a total eclipse of the sun occurred. Both sides paused to watch with superstitious

* Boyer. He had been rowing about for two days and nights on the chance of falling in with the fleet.

awe the gradual swallowing up of the source of heat and light, but with the reappearance of the sun the battle began anew. That an augury should be drawn from a phenomenon so incomprehensible to ignorant minds was a matter of course, and the augury which suggested itself to the minds of the Catalonians was fortunately a favourable one. As the well-known device of Louis XIV. was a sun in splendour, an eclipse occurring on the day when his troops were actually in retreat, could portend nothing less than the annihilation of his Majesty's affairs in the Spanish kingdom. The French took the road to Perpignan.*

While these events were passing in the eastern provinces, Galway, on the other side of Spain, had not been inactive, though it is possible that he might have turned his opportunities to better account. It should be borne in mind, however, that as the whole country intervening between Catalonia and the Portugese frontier was in hostile possession, communications between the respective commanders could only take place by the circuitous route of the sea. Galway, in fact, was reduced to glean nearly all his information as to what was transpiring in Catalonia and Valencia from the untrustworthy reports of deserters.†

The fairest prospects lay before his army of twenty-five thousand men when it assembled in the early spring at Elvas on the frontier. All the most valuable portion of Philip's army, that is to say, the French regiments, had been withdrawn for service in Catalonia. The only force remaining to dispute the invasion of the Allies consisted of about four or five thousand wretchedly trained Spanish horse and the same number of foot. Upon Berwick, now a marshal of France, had been imposed the painful and responsible duty of protecting the frontiers, nay, even the capital of the King of Spain, with this inadequate body of men.‡

That the Allied army should push forward into Spain and attempt the capture of Madrid, had been determined during the winter by the Council at Lisbon. No slight pressure, how-

* The eclipse took place on the 12th of May at nine in the morning. Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Burnet.

† His own narrative in the Parliamentary History.

‡ Mémoires de Berwick.

ever, had been requisite to produce this decision. The Portuguese had little inclination for the enterprise. They, like the Dutch, had private interests to subserve in joining the coalition. Badajoz, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Placencia were to them what the towns of Flanders and Brabant were to the republicans, objects formerly of apprehension and now of covetousness. It was their wish, therefore, that the Allied troops should spend a year or two in enlarging their Portuguese borders, in conquering for them towns which at a general peace they might be allowed to retain. From such dreams it was necessary to rouse the Ministers of Don Pedro by some plain speaking. The representatives of England and Holland joined in insisting that the invasion of Spain should be undertaken.* As the army guarding the Spanish frontier had now been reduced to insignificance, a golden opportunity presented itself of finishing the war by a single bold march. But more, as the chief weight of Philip's forces was to be thrown upon the Allies in Valencia and Catalonia, it was incumbent upon the honour of the Portuguese to make a diversion in favour of their friends. Thus urged, the Ministers reluctantly consented to the enterprise. They displayed, however, even more than their usual apathy in assisting the commanders. The spring came; the troops were destitute of the most essential requisites; and the magazines could furnish nothing. It was found necessary to wait until the fields could supply forage for the horses. When it was at length thought feasible to commence operations, disputes broke out between the commanders of the English and Dutch regiments and the Portuguese officers. The latter, instigated by national feelings, represented the necessity of obtaining Badajoz before committing themselves to a march into Spain. Galway had too much sense to be entrapped into this scheme, which would have consumed valuable time, and declared that their communications would be sufficiently assured by taking Alcantara. The Portuguese, after much grumbling, gave way. The town was invested and captured. Galway then issued the customary proclamation of the Allied powers, and began his march towards Madrid.†

Berwick, feeling himself to be in no condition to cope with

* Boyer. † Galway's Narrative.

the invaders, retired as they advanced. The road lay through the rich pastoral country of Estremadura, and the inhabitants, being utterly defenceless, prudently declared at once for King Charles, and offered proofs of their loyalty by keeping his troops well supplied with provisions. Coria and Placencia, two towns barely fortified, surrendered at the first summons. But arrived at Almaraz the Portuguese began to be afflicted with so many doubts and apprehensions that Galway thought it advisable to summon a council of war. Not a word of information had as yet reached the army as to what was passing at Barcelona, beyond the bare fact that the city had been invested both by land and sea. The Portuguese, who were perhaps aware that the defences were not in first-rate order, and that the garrison was far from being sufficient, inclined strongly to the belief that Philip was by this time in possession, and that his victorious troops were on their return towards Madrid. Should this be the case a few days more of marching would bring them face to face with a much superior enemy, and they would have to fight their way back to the frontier through a country which would have too surely shaken off its newly-born allegiance to the Austrian sovereign. Under these circumstances it was their advice that the march to Madrid should be abandoned for the present, and that while waiting for further information the army should be set down to the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. All the English and Dutch officers were for proceeding at all hazards. But the troops they commanded formed but a fourth or fifth part of the army. There was no option therefore but to yield to the will of the Portuguese, who obstinately refused to make another step in an easterly direction. Upon the 11th of May, the very same day upon which the discomfited forces of Philip were flying towards France, Galway turned his back upon the perfectly defenceless capital, and marched to invest Ciudad Rodrigo.*

That city, whose simple wall had not been improved and perhaps not repaired since the time of the Goths, and which was garrisoned only by a single regiment, nevertheless sustained a week's siege before it deigned to capitulate. At length on the 1st of June a messenger from Peterborough reached the

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Mémoires de Berwick.

camp, and Galway learned the events which had transpired in the east of Spain. The Portuguese officers could interpose no further objections, and two days afterwards the army was again on its road to Madrid.

It is interesting to glance for a moment at the scene of terror and confusion, which, from the time it became known that the Allies were marching upon the capital, prevailed about the young Queen, who had been left behind as regent, while Philip was enacting the part of a warrior before Barcelona. The first measure taken by her servants was to pack the royal baggage in readiness to be sent off, a work which, however, was of easy performance, inasmuch as the King had already either converted into cash or taken with him, almost every article of value. The next thing done was to carry the image of our lady of Atocha round the city. Human means to avert the impending calamity were not, however, neglected. An edict was issued enjoining upon the nobility of Castile to take up arms in defence of their sovereign. The grandees and public officials in Madrid were summoned to the palace, and to each of these classes the Queen appealed in earnest terms for assistance. Each person who took upon himself to reply assured her Majesty that his life and fortune should be devoted to her service; but there was too much reason to apprehend that their assurances were merely complimentary, and that the general opinion was that the star of the Bourbons was setting in Spain. An attempt to induce the respectable citizens to form themselves into volunteer regiments likewise proved abortive. Either the Madrilenians had no disposition for war, or what is more probable, they had not that hearty affection for their sovereign that was felt by the peasantry, and thought that the mere exchange of an Austrian for a French king was of little moment to them. By one class only was any active disposition shown to befriend the Bourbons, and that class was the priesthood. The Papal nuncio, the Archbishops and chapters of Toledo, Seville, Granada, and Navarre, all sent contributions of money to her Majesty; and two Bishops, of Murcia and Origuela, took up arms, appeared at the head of the militia of their provinces, and rendered important service in checking the tendency to rebel which had been excited by the activity of

Peterborough and his little band. The news of Galway's retreat, unaccountable as it seemed in Madrid, afforded for a time considerable relief to the Court; but in three weeks it was again reported that the Allied army was advancing. A few more days brought Philip back to his Queen. This step he had taken against the urgent advice of Berwick, who, being destitute of all hope of hindering the Allies from their design, deemed it absurd for his Majesty to subject himself to the ignominy which a flight from his capital would involve. His recommendation to the King was to wait at Burgos until troops had been procured from France, and he was in condition to take the field against the invaders. But four months had passed since the feeble monarch had beheld his wife. Away from her he was an imperfect and melancholy being, and he was dying for conjugal solace. Ten blissful days he was permitted to pass by her side. The near approach of the Allied army then compelled the counsellors to separate the royal pair. The Queen was sent off to Burgos. Philip, in the hope that his presence might have effect upon the doubtful loyalty of the Spanish troops, joined the army of Berwick.*

The Allied army, after having traversed with little opposition the stony passes of the Guadarrama, encamped under the walls of Madrid, and received the ready submission of the magistrates. The force had, from the necessity of leaving garrisons in towns, and from a bad habit the Portuguese soldiers had contracted of deserting whenever temptation presented itself, dwindled considerably from the twenty-five thousand men of which it had at first consisted. Its numbers were still, however, sufficient to keep Berwick at a respectful distance, and to overawe the friends of King Philip, while King Charles was proclaimed in the streets of the city.†

* Lettres Historiques; Mémoires de Berwick.

† The reception of the allies by the Madrilenians is thus described in the Lettres Historiques:—"Le Magistrât en corps se declara d'abord pour ce prince (Charles), le peuple témoigna une joie extraordinaire, et accourût en foule au camp des Alliés, accuillant et félicitant les officiers et soldats avec toutes sortes de caresses. Les dames même, nonobstant la grande réserve où ils vivent en Espagne, prirent la prétexte de la promenade pour venir dans leur carosses voir l'armée, et enfin il n'y eut aucune sorte de marques de joie et d'applaudissements que les habitants grands et petits, nobles et artisans de tout âge et de tout sexe ne donnassent à la venue des Alliés en leur ville." Four grandees of Spain declared for Charles.

The month that followed the occupation of Madrid is undoubtedly the turning-point in the fortunes of the combatants in this great and terrible war. The Allies were at the height of their power, prosperity, and prestige. They were masters of a third part of the disputed kingdom. Philip had fled from his capital, and the troops who remained to him were wholly insufficient to cope with the forces which the Allies, if united, could bring to bear upon them. Had Charles and Peterborough marched at this critical time from the east, and Galway simultaneously from Madrid against the Spanish army, there seems no room to doubt that, at the mere rumour of their approach, Philip would have hastened out of the country. His grandfather was then in no condition to send him back at the head of a large army, for he needed every soldier to protect his own frontiers against the victorious forces of Marlborough and Eugene. Philip's chance of returning would, therefore, have rested upon the attachment of the Spaniards to his person, and it is manifest that they were divided in their sympathies. The peasantry of the Castiles, of Andalusia, and Murcia were certainly for Philip; but the inhabitants of Catalonia, Valencia, and part of Aragon, professed themselves enthusiastic for Charles. As far as personal qualities went Charles's chance of winning the affections of the people were as good as Philip's, if he were once seated on the throne. In this respect, indeed, the two Princes were a very fair match. Both were young, grave in demeanour, good-looking, and well-mannered. Both possessed in an extraordinary degree one quality which has ever been held in the highest estimation by the population of the Peninsula, an edifying reverence for images and relics, and for the holy personages who exhibited them. The presumption seems to be therefore that, had Charles seized the opportunity of driving his rival from the kingdom, and established himself upon the abandoned throne, his array of princely virtues would before long have conquered the hearts of all his subjects. The Allied Powers might, without any undue strain upon their resources, have protected his throne against the machinations of France while the revolution in the feelings of the Spanish people was in progress.

But it was destined that Charles should lose the crown

when actually within his grasp, for the want of sufficient energy to seize it. While the beaten and discouraged soldiers of Philip, who had been driven across the French frontier, were slowly reassembling round his standard at Burgos, Charles's German advisers were leisurely deliberating how they might send their master to Madrid with proper magnificence. Peterborough, enraged at their ridiculous waste of time, raved and stormed with a vehemence which offended the fastidious ears of the Prince, and set his entire court upon revolving expedients to get rid of him. Galway, for his part, wholly unable to imagine what the others could be about, was content to do nothing.

Peterborough had, soon after the retreat of Philip from before Barcelona, submitted to Charles a plan for reaching Madrid; and the plan, devised with his accustomed sagacity, had been formally approved. It was arranged that the Earl should return with part of the troops to Valencia, and that his Majesty should join him as soon as he was assured that the road to the capital from that city had been opened and was free of danger. Peterborough had soon executed his part of the programme by capturing Requeña, the sole fortified town which existed between Valencia and Madrid, and then sat down to await the arrival of the King. For a whole month Charles loitered in Barcelona, while his Ministers were puzzling themselves how to provide him with a suitable travelling equipage.* General Stanhope urged upon him repeatedly the necessity of taking immediate action. His own late master, King William, he said, so far from thinking about his dignity when time was valuable, made his entrance into London in a hackney coach.† But the moral of the story was lost upon Charles and his counsellors, who probably thought that, although simplicity might not be unbecoming to the President of a nation of traders, it ill-befitted the brother of an Emperor. At length, however, the young King set out, and proceeded as far as Tarragona. There he received a deputation from the citizens of Saragossa, who had thrown off their allegiance to Philip, and who were anxious to behold the prince whom they

* Lamberty.

† Letter from Walpole to Robert Walpole, quoted in Lord Mahon's History.

fondly expected would shortly become their sovereign. The wealth of this city, and the apparent enthusiasm of its inhabitants, held out strong temptations to the needy court. In an evil hour for himself Charles was induced to abandon the plan of reaching Madrid by way of Valencia for that of proceeding through Saragossa. He wrote to Peterborough to inform him of his change of route. The Earl was in despair. Here was a road opened without the chance of meeting an adversary upon it, and his Majesty must needs reject it for another passing through a country occupied by the enemy. He was little in the habit of repressing his feelings, and upon this occasion gave free vent to his wrath against Charles and his advisers. He was more weary, he protested, of serving such masters than a galley-slave of his oar.*

Meanwhile Galway at Madrid had been expecting the arrival of Charles with almost as much impatience as Peterborough had expected him at Valencia, and was utterly unable to conceive what detained him. There was a report that Charles was dead: there were persons who actually swore they had seen his body embalmed.† Perhaps the strangest part in all their transactions was that between Galway and Peterborough not one line of communication passed during the whole time the former remained at Madrid.‡ There was apparently no obstacle to a free correspondence between the two commanders. The explanation is, there can be little doubt, that each was jealous of the other. Both were ambitious of the honour of putting his Majesty in possession of his capital. Peterborough seems to have suspected that Charles's change of route was made at the suggestion of Galway.

While invaluable moments were thus being consumed by the Allies, the force at Burgos was constantly augmenting. By the middle of July, Philip and Berwick were enabled to take the field with confidence. The prudent inhabitants of the Castilian towns, now that they saw their master's star again in the ascendant, began to afford proofs of their loyalty. There was a general rising. The supply of provisions was cut off

* Peterborough to Stanhope, July 24.
† Peterborough to Stanhope, July 20.
‡ Galway's narrative; Peterborough's answers in the Parliamentary History.

from Madrid, and Galway was compelled to march out to Guadalaxara in search of subsistence.*

Up to this time his ignorance as to what was passing at Burgos had been as complete as his ignorance as to what his friends were doing at Barcelona and Valencia. That the routed army of Philip might be returning to its standards was a contingency which seems but dimly to have presented itself to his mind. Now, however, reports came in as to the strength of the enemy which filled him with dismay. During the first week in August he was joined by Charles and Peterborough with some additional battalions and squadrons, but the united force of the Allies was now by all accounts greatly inferior in numbers to that assembled under Philip and Berwick at a distance of less than twenty miles. Peterborough asserted his right to take the chief command; and Galway, under the untoward circumstances of the case, was not averse to his rival assuming so grave a responsibility. But Das Minas, the Portuguese general, who had borne with impatience even the gently exerted sway of Galway, at once protested he would not be governed by Peterborough; and the Earl, in high dudgeon, left his comrades to their fate, and quitted not only the army but Spain itself.† The Allied army fell back to Chinchon, near Aranguez, thus abandoning Madrid, which was retaken by a detachment of French on the 4th of August, after having been forty days in the possession of the Allies. From this place the army, a short time afterwards, commenced its retreat towards Valencia. The difficulties and perils of the march became greater each day. Philip and Berwick were in close pursuit. The peasantry hung like wasps round the columns, cutting off every straggler, and putting the general to the greatest straits to procure provisions and forage.‡ It is but justice to Galway to remark that the retreat was conducted with so much prudence and skill, that Berwick never once entrapped him into a position where he could take advantage of his superior numbers. It should seem that Galway, although destitute of any great

* During the brief stay in Madrid the army had lost many men through sickness.

† Galway's narrative. Charles commissioned Peterborough to raise a loan in Genoa.

‡ Mémoires de Berwick; Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

natural abilities for war, was as consummate a general as study and experience, joined with a conscientious sense of responsibility for the safety of his men, can make. The army, having at last reached the friendly province of Valencia, was distributed among various towns between Requeña on the frontier, and Denia on the coast.

Upon a calm and impartial review of the immense mass of evidence relating to this campaign, certain conclusions force themselves upon the mind of the reader. The chief causes of the failure of the Allies were the unenterprising character of Charles and the obstinacy and dullness of his German counsellors. Yet it cannot be gainsaid that the irritable temperament of Peterborough had much to do in bringing about the misfortunes. He exasperated the Germans by his overbearing manners, and they retaliated by imbuing their docile young master with a prejudice against him. It is not unlikely, as was suggested at the time, that the inclination to avoid Peterborough, and to inflict upon him a disappointment, conduced more to the fatal alterations in Charles's plan of reaching Madrid than the attractions held out by Saragossa. The Earl, to whom censure was intolerable, immediately began to fill every court in Europe with his complaints. He despatched to Secretary Hedges a narrative of enormous length,—a sort of two-edged sword, as Marlborough described it, to strike at once Charles and his Court, and every Minister at home who had sent him orders. It is not surprising that the graceful and courtly Duke should have conceived but a poor opinion of the commander who, he thought, had lost a fine opportunity of seating Charles on the throne of Spain for want of a little patience and management.* With what consummate skill, with what adroit flattery would he, in Peterborough's position, have made friends of those blundering Germans, and insinuated himself into the good graces of that feeble prince! He was for recalling the Earl from a country where his presence was not only useless but engendered strife. But his advice was not immediately acted upon. Peterborough's dazzling exploit at Barcelona was still fresh in the memories of his countrymen; and Godolphin probably thought that some caution was neces-

* Marlborough's opinion of Peterborough is expressed in several of his letters.

sary in dealing with a man so popular, and who was unquestionably endowed with great genius. Galway, for his part, had been soliciting his recall almost from the beginning of the campaign.

It remains only to record in the list of the successes and failures of this memorable year that the grand project of a descent upon the French coast, upon which much stress had been laid by Marlborough and Godolphin, was never executed. During some six months indeed every seaport town from Dunkirk to Bayonne had been kept in a state of alarm by rumours of the mighty armament that was preparing in England. Six regiments of French refugees were actually raised, and a fleet was equipped with the most ample stores. But the preparations had absorbed so much time that autumn had arrived before the ships were ready to put to sea. Then gales arose, and after one or two futile attempts to clear away from St. Helen's, the project was given up, and the destination of the fleet changed for Lisbon.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE year 1706 must have been long distinguished in the recollections of the English people for the additions it brought to the stock of national glory. From May till October the streets and open places of London were in a blaze with illuminations and bonfires, so quickly was one messenger followed by another with the tidings of fresh victories or of the surrender of large towns. The intelligence of the defeat of the French army in the Netherlands reached the country almost concurrently with the intelligence that Philip had been forced to raise the siege of Barcelona, that he had made a precipitate retreat into France, and that the towns of Catalonia were inaugurating with enthusiasm the reign of Charles. On the 27th of June Anne went in state to St. Paul's, amid the acclamations of her subjects, to return thanks to the Almighty for the prosperity of her arms. Before long, however, the public joy had received a fresh accession. It was announced that the Allies were in possession of Madrid, and that the young prince in whose behalf this gigantic war had been undertaken, was expected each day to enter his capital in triumph. Towards the close of September came the further good news that Eugene and the Duke of Savoy had achieved a complete victory under the walls of Turin, and that the French were flying in disorder from the country they had so long and so cruelly oppressed.

Half forgotten amid the tumult of exultation, a commission, composed of sixty-two persons, had been meanwhile deliberating upon terms of union between the two kingdoms of England and Scotland. That any good would result from their labours was scarcely expected even by sagacious politicians.* The English

* Burnet remarks that "the union of the two kingdoms was a work of which many had quite despaired, in which number I was one. Those who entertained

public in general seems to have regarded the Commission merely as a kind of sacrifice to decency. The representatives of each kingdom, it was surmised, were anxious, before proceeding to settle their differences by arms, to prove themselves to be in the right, and to cast upon the opposite party the reproach of causing a civil war. It was perfectly natural that people should view the matter in this light. They had seen the project of fusing the two nations repeatedly attempted, and the same insurmountable bars to agreement always presenting themselves. The Scotch would listen to no compromise upon the question of religion. The English would of course demur to sharing their commercial advantages with parties who could offer nothing by way of compensation. There were, moreover, a hundred petty influences at work to impede the settlement. The smaller peers and landowners of Scotland were afraid that their power and importance would be curtailed; the Jacobites looked upon the union as a Whiggish device, the object of which was to secure the northern kingdom against the return of its hereditary sovereign; the priests of both countries were jealous of each other. Prognostications of the failure of the Commission were, in truth, almost universal, when towards the end of July the astounding fact was published that the two sets of representatives had come to an agreement, that Articles of Union had actually been drawn up, had received the Queen's approval, and would be submitted to the Houses of legislation in the two kingdoms.

The choice of the Commissioners on both sides had been left to the Queen, and it is to the wisdom of Godolphin in making the selection that should be ascribed in the first instance the excellent result of the conferences. The thirty-one persons appointed on behalf of Scotland were, with but one exception, attached to the principles established at the Revolution and favourable to the scheme in hand. A large proportion of them, moreover, held some post under Government.* The Commis-

better hopes thought it must have run into a long negotiation for several years. But beyond all men's expectation it was begun and finished in the compass of one."

* According to Burnet, the Dukes of Queensberry and Argyle were entrusted with the business of deciding upon the Commissioners for Scotland. See his remarks upon the nominations.

sion included the moderate Queensberry, the clever Seafield, and a nobleman whose zeal for civilization had once instigated him to a cruel deed in the Highlands, the able but unscrupulous Earl of Stair. Argyle was prevented by his military duties from being of the number; and Hamilton, notwithstanding the important services he had rendered in the last Parliament, was prudently passed over. The one undoubted Jacobite, who, to his own surprise found himself included in the list, was Lockhart of Carnwarth. His name had perhaps been suggested to Godolphin by his uncle Wharton, who must have been ignorant of the strength of his nephew's convictions; and Lockhart accepted the appointment under the impression that, by acting as a spy on his colleagues, and reporting what passed to his friends, he might be of service to the exiled family.*

Upon the side of England appeared a splendid array of talent, selected from both the political parties of the state,—Cowper, Somers, Holt, Trevor, Simon Harcourt, Godolphin, Halifax, Henry Boyle, Wharton, and Harley. Two prominent names are indeed missing in the list. Burnet may have been passed over because two ecclesiastics, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, were of the number. No reason can be assigned for the omission of St. John.

The Commissioners met for the first time on the 16th of April, at the official residence of Godolphin. The old building, which stood on the Cockpit of Henry VIII., and which was devoted throughout the last century to the purposes of Government, has been pulled down in recent times to make way for the series of offices now appropriated to the Treasury and Board of Trade. The business was conducted with a zeal and a spirit of mutual conciliation that insured its being brought to a successful conclusion. On two occasions Anne presented herself in the chamber of conference, but her admonitions to despatch were scarcely needed. At the forty-fourth meeting, on the 22nd of July, the Articles of Union were signed by twenty-six of the Scottish and twenty-seven of the English Commissioners.

Indeed the success of the Commissioners in a task which to

* Lockhart's Memoirs. On the English side there was also one Commissioner opposed to the Union, the Tory Archbishop of York. He never attended the conferences and appears to have been appointed only out of deference to his rank.

ninety-nine out of every hundred of their countrymen, and, perhaps, at first even to themselves, had seemed next to impossible, is a good instance of the ease with which difficulties, which, when lazily contemplated, appear insurmountable, may be overcome when encountered with an honest determination to master them. The truth is that, although Commissioners had frequently met before to treat for an Union, they had come with a conviction that they were assembled merely for the purpose of bowing to each other, disputing a little and then breaking up. The most formidable obstacle to an agreement had now been virtually removed. The two nations, although both professing Christianity, differed upon some points of Church government, which, to superior minds, may appear trifling, but which to the bulk of the people imported scarcely less than the salvation or destruction of their souls. Had England professed the creed of Islam and proposed to Scotland the exchange of the Bible for the Koran, the indignation of the Scottish people could not have been greater than would have been excited by a proposal to exchange Presbyters for Bishops and extemporaneous prayer for the Church service. It had now become plain that Presbytery was dear to the whole population of the northern kingdom, and that Episcopacy was held in abhorrence. An Act had been but recently passed to secure the Kirk against any alterations which the tyranny of England or the malice of the devil might desire to effect. There was little likelihood that the English would yield one single prayer of their majestic and beautiful liturgy to gratify the prejudices of the Scotch. All hope of compromise between the two nations upon the subject of religion was therefore out of the question. Before the Commissioners assembled each gentleman appears to have been privately instructed that the topic would not be discussed, but that each kingdom should retain the establishment of its choice guaranteed to it as amply as might be desired.

Several questions of enormous magnitude were disposed of with little difficulty. It was readily agreed that England and Scotland should form one united kingdom to be called Great Britain, that the succession to the crown should be in the Princess Sophia and her heirs, and that the subjects of both

kingdoms should be placed upon a footing of equality in respect of the rights and privileges of trade hitherto enjoyed exclusively by either of them. At the twentieth meeting, moreover, another subject which had been always regarded as a bar to the Union almost as insuperable as the subject of religion, was brought on the carpet and disposed of without a word of dispute.. The people of Scotland bore to their laws, their modes of legal procedure, and the ancient tribunals of their land, a reverential fondness second only in degree to that which they bore to their religious establishment. The notion of extending the jurisdiction of Westminster Hall over Scotland had therefore been prudently abandoned by English statesmen. It was proposed by the Scottish Commissioners that, while legislation upon matters of public right and Government should be the same for both kingdoms, no alteration should be made in the existing laws of Scotland which concerned private right, except for the evident advantage of the Scottish people; that the courts should remain for all time coming as then constituted, subject only to such regulations as the Parliament of Great Britain might make for the better administration of justice; and that no causes of action which arose in Scotland should be cognizable either by the courts of chancery or common law. To this proposal the English Commissioners promptly acceded.*

The questions which remained for adjustment fell under three heads. First, taxation; secondly, the representation of Scotland in the united Parliament; and, thirdly, the rank and privileges which the Scottish nobility should enjoy in England.

That the two kingdoms should be equally taxed was evidently necessary to prevent the people of one kingdom from underselling the people of the other. But a formidable difficulty appeared at the threshold of the question of taxation. While the revenues of Scotland were unincumbered, and entirely applicable to public purposes, those of England were charged with the payment of principal and interest upon a

* My principal authorities throughout these debates are Defoe's History of the Union; Burnet, and Lockhart's Memoirs. I have not discussed the topics of debate in the order in which they arose.

debt already amounting to seventeen millions sterling, and which was rapidly increasing. That Scotland would, in the event of an union, be drawn in to contribute to the liquidation of the monstrous debt of the sister kingdom, had long been a favourite argument of those Scottish declaimers who were adverse to the measure. By English statesmen, however, the absurdity of expecting the Scottish people to assist without compensation in paying debts contracted by England before the Union was fully admitted. To obtain that equality of taxation so necessary, recourse was had therefore to an expedient. It was arranged that an equivalent should be paid to Scotland for that proportion of her revenues which would be applied to pay the interest on the English debt. This equivalent was, after much abstruse calculation, settled at three hundred and ninety-eight thousand and eighty-five pounds ten shillings. The sum was to be immediately raised and transmitted to Scotland, there to be applied to different purposes calculated for the advantage of the kingdom, or, at all events, for the contentation of those parties who might be most influential in opposing the Union. Debts to the amount of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds contracted by the Government were first to be discharged. The money was then to be applied towards paying off the capital of that ill-starred African company, whose misfortunes or follies had spread ruin among Scottish families, and whose threatened competition with the East India Company had excited so much jealousy in England. If any balance remained it was to be employed in raising Scottish coin to the English standard, and in promoting the manufactures and fisheries of the country.

In raising the taxation of Scotland to an equality with the taxation of England it was felt necessary to proceed with the utmost caution. The English, from time immemorial a wealthy nation and enjoying abundant means of increasing their riches, had been accustomed to support burdens with ease which it would have been useless to impose upon the Scotch. A fair estimate of the respective taxation of the two nations may be obtained by comparing their excise receipts. On an average of three years the mean yearly amount paid into the English exchequer from this source was nine hundred and fifty thousand

pounds; and this amount was paid by a population computed at six millions. The Scottish Government derived only thirty-three thousand five hundred pounds from its excise duty; and this was levied on a population, which, if we exclude that portion to whose savage or uncertain homes no exciseman dared venture, may be set down at eight hundred thousand souls.* The contribution of the Scotch was thus at the rate of ten-pence per head, while the contribution of the English was about three shillings and twopence per head.

Again, the danger of laying novel taxes upon a poor but fierce and determined people was one not lightly to be encountered. Of all the arguments which had been employed to set the lower orders of the Scotch against the Union, the one which had been most successful, next to the horrible prediction that a pair of lawn sleeves might be looked for in the pulpit, was that such impositions as the window tax would be extended to the northern kingdom. There was another tax, now grown familiar to the English, but which, if rashly imposed upon the Scotch, would most assuredly excite a rebellion—the tax upon salt. To the inhabitants of the richly-stocked pasturages of the south the commodity might be little more than a luxury: but to the poor of Scotland, who habitually cured and preserved their meat, and to the numerous fishermen of the country who salted their fish, it was a necessary of life. Fortunately, the English Commissioners were in a proper frame of mind to give due consideration to these matters. Several of the taxes now levied in England had been only imposed on account of the war, and had but a few years to run, such as the taxes on windows and coals. From these it was agreed that Scotland should be exempt. It was furthermore agreed that the duty on salt should not be applied to Scotland until seven years after the Union.

The land tax presented some difficulties in adjusting. It was indeed familiar to both nations; and a person unacquainted with some peculiarities in the Scottish social system might have inferred that the equalisation of the rate was fair, that it could be no greater hardship upon a Scottish landlord to pay four-

* The entire population of Scotland is supposed to have been at this time 1,050,000. See article Scotland in the Encyclopædia Britannica.

shillings out of every twenty received than upon an English landlord. Yet the position of the former was in truth widely different from the position of the latter. The English farmer was generally punctual in his payments, and brought his rent in money. The struggling cultivator of the ungrateful Scottish soil was almost always unable to meet quarter-day; and it had grown to a kind of custom among landlords to allow their tenants a whole term. When the rent did at last make its appearance it was not in money but in produce; and when the landlord sold this produce he was accustomed to allow the purchaser a term to find the money. The best part of a year consequently elapsed before the Scottish landlord had his rent in an available form, and during this time he was running two risks of never getting his rent at all,—the insolvency of the tenant and the insolvency of the dealer to whom he sold the produce. In Scotland, moreover, the tax was charged to the individual in exact proportion to the income he derived from his land. In England the tax was levied, not directly upon the proprietors of the soil, but upon the counties. In 1692 there had been a valuation of the real and personal property possessed by the several counties, and each county had been rated at a certain sum. But this valuation was below, and in most instances very far below, the incomes actually derived by the inhabitants; and the proof of this lay in the circumstance that when a land tax at the rate of four shillings in the pound was imposed by Parliament, the counties could generally satisfy the demands upon them by imposing a rate of about eighteenpence in the pound. In view of these inequalities it was thought advisable to have recourse to a compromise. It was decided, after much discussion, to value Scottish rentals at about the fortieth part of English rentals. When a tax of four shillings in the pound was imposed by Parliament, the amount expected from Scotland was to be forty-eight thousand pounds. This was, in effect, the sum which had been for some years received by the Scottish exchequer on account of land tax.

The representation of Scotland in the united Parliament was again one of those difficult and delicate questions which, had not the Commissioners on both sides been sincerely desirous of coming to an arrangement, might have been debated for ever.

It was obvious that any calculation upon this matter could have only two bases. Scotland was entitled to a proportion of representatives either according to the ratio her taxation or to the ratio her population bore to that of England. Yet a calculation worked out upon either of these bases produced only preposterous results. The land-tax of Scotland had been fixed at a fortieth part of that of England. But if Scotland were allowed no more than that proportion of representatives she would add only thirteen persons to the five hundred and fifteen who represented England; and it was absurd that a considerable kingdom should command no greater influence than what was commanded by several great English families. On the other hand, to determine her proportion of representatives by her population would be giving more than she could in fairness claim, and more than there was any likelihood of her obtaining from the members of the English Parliament. It was at that time estimated that the population of Scotland was about one-third of that of England, or two millions.* The number of representatives to which she would be entitled under such a calculation would be therefore no less than one hundred and seventy-two. Even if the mean were taken between these two calculations the balance, it was considered, would be too greatly in favour of Scotland. It was again necessary therefore to resort to a compromise. How many representatives would England be willing to allow, and with how few would Scotland be contented? There was indeed one precedent which the Commissioners might take as some kind of guide. During the short period of the Protectorate there had been an united Parliament at Westminster, and the number of seats which Cromwell had assigned to Scotland had been thirty. The English Commissioners thought therefore that thirty-eight representatives would be no illiberal allowance. The Scottish Commissioners asked for fifty. But the two parties were now at no great distance from each other, and the bargain was soon concluded by the English raising their offer to forty-five representatives.

This was, in effect, to allow the Scotch, while the value

* Defoe's History of the Union. The calculation was, no doubt, enormously in excess of the actual population.

of their taxable property was rated at no more than a fortieth part of the taxable property of England, nearly the eleventh share in the joint legislature. It was agreed that the same proportion should be allowed them in the Upper House. At every future Parliament the Peers of Scotland were to elect from their body sixteen representatives who should sit in the House of Lords, and enjoy, during the continuance of the Parliament, equal rights and privileges of speaking and voting with their English brethren.

In thus settling the representation of Scotland, there was, however, a circumstance which must have excited considerable misgivings. It was impossible but that one class in the northern kingdom should suffer by the change. The peerage of Scotland consisted of one hundred and forty-five members. Each one of those members had hitherto sate as of right in the Parliament of Scotland. But now that that Parliament was to be closed for ever no Peer of inferior wealth and importance could entertain much expectation of finding himself among the sixteen who were still to retain a voice in the Legislature. Out of the hundred and forty-five a hundred and twenty-nine would be excluded from, and the greater part without hopes of being again admitted to, the dignity of participating in the government of their country. It might, therefore, be anticipated that the lesser nobility, who formed nearly one-half of the Scottish Parliament, would oppose an Union upon such conditions with all their might, and that their efforts would be seconded by such small lairds or squires who doubted their ability to compete for a seat in the House of Commons. This difficulty, and in truth it seemed almost insurmountable, it was clear that the Scottish Commissioners would have to face in recommending the articles of Union to their Parliament. Meantime certain concessions were made to Scottish peers which, it was hoped, would have a soothing effect. It was agreed that they should have every privilege enjoyed by the Peers of England, except that of sitting in Parliament. They would thus be exempted from being arrested for debt, no bad compensation, it was conceived, to a poor noble, for being docked of his dignity as a legislator.* It was also settled that Scotch peerages

* Dartmouth's note to Burnet.

existing at the date of the Union should rank after existing English peerages of the same degree, but before peerages of Great Britain which might be subsequently created.

Thus far the labours of the Commissioners had succeeded beyond hope. The articles of Union were drawn up, engrossed and signed by twenty-seven of the English and twenty-six of the Scotch; and three copies were made—one for the Queen, and two for the Parliaments of the respective kingdoms. But the most formidable difficulty of all was yet to be encountered. Whether the Scotch Commissioners would succeed in carrying the articles through their Parliament was now the question, and one upon which it was not easy to form an opinion, inasmuch as very little had transpired about the terms to which the Commissioners had agreed. The general belief in England was that, in the existing mood of the northern population, no concessions which English statesmen could make would suffice to render the project of an Union palatable. Betting upon the event had become the rage, and gave great annoyance to the Ministers. Upon the same day that the articles were presented to the Queen appeared an Order in Council, which, after attributing such wagers to Papists and disaffected subjects, gave warning that all persons known to be concerned in them would be prosecuted.*

Most of the Scotch Commissioners returned home without delay. The Parliament could not well be summoned to meet until the harvest was over. They had, therefore, two good months before them to explore the minds of the leading members, to explain, soothe, cajole, and perhaps to bribe. What passed in their closets during the months of August and September would furnish, no doubt, an interesting page in history could authentic materials for compiling it be found. What is certain is that their operations, of whatever nature they were, were attended with great success. The prospect of recovering the money which had been lost in the African Company no doubt wrought favourably on the minds of many zealous patriots who had been entangled in that unfortunate concern. Several of the minor Peers, it was also said, were secured to the side of Government by hopes which were held

* *London Gazette*; Boyer.

out to them of being created Peers of Great Britain as soon as the Union had passed.*

Before the 3rd of October when the Parliament, summoned expressly to consider the articles of Union, was opened by Queensberry as High Commissioner, the Ministers knew with tolerable certainty who would be their opponents, and upon whom they could depend. Hamilton, mortified by the contempt with which his advances had been received, had resumed his position as leader of the Opposition; and his former followers, who would indeed have been helpless if deprived of his support, had been only too glad to accept his excuses and to feign their belief in his sincerity. Under his guidance, little to be trusted as it was, the Jacobites ranged themselves in one compact and united body. They had employed the interval between the completion of the articles and the assembling of the Parliament no less busily than had the Ministers. It had been found impossible to beguile them with the arguments which had converted not a few staunch old Conservatives. They knew, by instinct as it were, that an Union, whatever might be its effect upon the fortunes of the people, would render their cause all but desperate. From the time the two kingdoms became one, Scotland might, upon the slightest alarm, be filled with troops and guarded by fleets that would effectually close the north against the exiled sovereign. To avert this danger they had been active in all directions. Broadsides had been scattered up and down the shires touching with great skill upon every chord in the national breast. A band of traitors to their God and their country, it was asserted, was dragging Scotland to destruction. The subversion of Presbytery, the reappearance of Prelacy, such an increase of taxation as must reduce every labouring man to starvation, the little trade the country possessed swallowed up by a herd of rapacious capitalists from the south, the laws, the Constitution, the Parliament subverted, the very crown and sceptre of the ancient kingdom carried off to England,—these were a few of the evils which the Jacobites predicted would follow the acceptance of the Union. In many places, more especially

* Lockhart calls the equivalent "a swingeing bribe to buy off the Scots members of Parliament from their duty."

the principal towns, the effect of these gloomy prophecies was to rouse the people to frenzy. But the interference of the rabble was not the only source to which the Jacobites looked for assistance. Now or never was the time for Louis to bestir himself. He must be made to understand that, unless he sent a force immediately, the cause of that family for whom he had already made such generous sacrifices, would be irretrievably lost. As soon as Lockhart returned to Edinburgh a conference was held, and a certain Captain Stratton was despatched to the Court of Versailles. He appears to have been received by the old monarch with much kindness. It was, however, represented to him that the God of Battles had put it out of his Majesty's power to send assistance to Scotland at this conjuncture; and Stratton was forced to return with no better fruits of his mission than a parcel of letters from James to his leading adherents.

It will suffice to mention the names of two other prominent opponents of the Union. Athol was on no friendly terms with Hamilton, and had given too many proofs of his fickleness and pusillanimity to be much trusted by the Jacobites. But there can be no doubt that his opposition was in this instance sincere, because it was interested. This great chieftain, the only one who could be considered a match for Argyle, was sensible that the consequences of an Union would be to impair that prerogative which he exercised in the Highlands over a poor and barbarous but innumerable race. The uncontrolled sovereignty he at present enjoyed was attributable in part to the ignorance of the Celts, and in part to the weakness of the executive in regions so wild and remote from the seat of government. But the executive would be immensely strengthened by terms of union which threw Scotland open without reserve to the forces of the South; while it required little sagacity to foresee that closer contact with a race of superior civilization would imbue the Celts with wider theories of duty, order, and government than they now possessed. The result would be that the House of Murray would decline from its commanding position to one no way superior to that enjoyed by an English peer. Again, the personal dignity of the chieftain would rather lose than gain by his entering the House of Lords. For however great might be

his power in the Highlands, the amount of cash he could take up with him to London would be scarcely sufficient to maintain him in such state as would keep the Southrons from laughing at his poverty. Another and far more honest though not wiser opponent of the Union was Fletcher of Saltoun. He, it is almost needless to say, was determined to cling to the independence of Scotland to the last, and it was likely that his warning voice would continue to be heard until the waves of English tyranny had finally closed over his beloved country. It was noticed when the Parliament assembled that the gathering of members was unusually large, and rumour attributed the increase to the Jacobites. A number of them, it was said, who had been hitherto prevented by their consciences from taking the oath to an usurper, had considered that at this critical conjuncture they would be committing a less sin by forswearing themselves than by neglecting to assist their friends.* Outside the Parliament House a wild mob stationed itself from the first, whose delight it was to hoot at and hustle every supporter of the Union who made his appearance, and to lavish its rough caresses upon the Duke of Hamilton.

The gentle manners of Queensberry, his knowledge of the leaders of the various parties, his presence of mind amid the clangour of parliamentary warfare, fitted him beyond any other man to be at the helm at a time when passions were so violently excited. The Queen's letter was read to the House. Anne informed her Scottish subjects that by the care and diligence of the Commissioners a treaty of union between her two kingdoms had been happily concluded. She hoped that the terms would be found acceptable. An union, she said, had long been desired by both nations, and it would be the highest glory of her reign if it were now perfected. She was persuaded it would prove the greatest blessing to her people. An entire and perfect union would be the foundation of lasting peace. It would secure religion, liberty, and property throughout the entire island, do away with internal animosities and international jealousies. The strength, the trade, the riches of both countries must needs increase by its means; and the two kingdoms, united in affection and interest, would be enabled to

* Defoe; but he says he is not sure of the truth of the assertion.'

resist all enemies, support the Protestant religion everywhere, and maintain the liberties of Europe.

When the Commissioner and the Chancellor had concluded their customary formal speeches, the articles were read to the House. A resolution was passed at the instance of the Ministers that they should be printed, and that a copy should be supplied to each member. The House then adjourned for a week.

At the third sitting on the 12th of October the Ministers opened the campaign by a motion that the articles should be again read. It was contended by a small party of the Opposition that the representatives of the counties and boroughs had no power to decide upon a question of no less magnitude than the subversion of the constitution without previously consulting their constituents, but the arguments employed in support of this view made little impression. In the first place, it was clear that every member had been already empowered by his constituents to act in the manner he considered most beneficial to their interests. To assert, moreover, that the articles under consideration involved the subversion of the constitution was an absurdity when they included the fullest provision for the continuance of the standing laws of the country which affected private right. This objection, therefore, was promptly overruled. A very clever and subtle manœuvre by the Opposition followed. A member, an Episcopalian, rose and moved that a day of fasting and prayer should be set apart for seeking the direction of the Almighty in the affair of the Union. There can be little doubt that the author of this motion aimed at something more than to create delay. The appointment of a day of fasting is the custom which a Government adopts when it considers that the sins of the nation have been heavier than usual, and that some dreadful evil may in consequence be apprehended. The most probable interpretation, therefore, that devout persons would put upon the fast day would be that it was an invitation of the Parliament to fall upon their knees, beg pardon for their sins, and entreat the Almighty to avert from the land the punishment of the Union. This motion, ingeniously calculated as it was to inflame the minds of the people, failed of success chiefly from the character of its propounder. The Parliament contained the usual proportion of

serious-minded men. To such it might seem highly proper to consult the Almighty on an affair so important as the Union. But it was felt that it was most unseemly that the proposal should come from the lips of a man who, if he prayed at all, addressed himself to distasteful Gods or in heterodox fashions.

A motion by the Opposition to adjourn the consideration of the articles for eight days to give the members a little further time for reflection was, at the next sitting, rejected by the large majority of sixty-four voices. It seemed clear therefore that, let what might befall from the violence of the rabble without, the Union would have a safe passage within the walls of the Parliament House. To one reasonable proposal, which seems to have emanated from the Opposition, general assent was given. It was determined that the articles should be read and discussed singly, but that no vote should be taken upon any one article until the whole had been read and considered. The first, which provided for the union of the two kingdoms, was then read. Some discussion took place, and the House again adjourned. A terrible manifestation was given that afternoon of the humour of the populace. The first member who appeared at the door was questioned by thousands of voices whether the first article had been voted. He replied that it had not. The crowd, in an ecstacy of delight, raised a tremendous shout, and the news flew round the city that Parliament had rejected the Union.

When the House again met, two days afterwards, an address was presented from the Commission which was then sitting under powers delegated by the general assembly of the Church. The public eye had long been turned with anxiety to the proceedings of this influential body of clergymen. For whatever difference of opinion might prevail among the laity, the clergy had as a rule been decided and vehement in expressing their dread and abhorrence of the Union. To many enthusiasts, who regarded nothing in the world but religion, the uniting of Scotland to a kingdom having a Church government which was held to be little better than Popery, was an alliance such as the wise and perfect Solomon contracted in his old age with idolatrous women. Even those divines who condescended to mix a little of worldly reasoning with their meditations, enter-

tained apprehensions as to the future safety of the Church; nor should their fears be considered altogether foolish. The Union once consummated, the Scottish Parliament dissolved for ever, what visible security was there that this Parliament of Great Britain might not, in spite of all promises to the contrary, proceed to pull down Presbytery and re-establish the Episcopalian system? The representatives Scotland would send to the House of Commons might be outvoted ten to one. Her sixteen Peers would not even fill as many seats in the House of Lords as the Bishops. Let the supporters of the Union argue, therefore, as they might, the only real security of Presbytery would be the honour of England and the desire of the English nation to continue on friendly terms with the people of Scotland. It seems, however, not to have occurred to those who were apprehensive for their beloved Church that she would still have the same safeguard she had ever had in the courage and strong arms of her disciples. There had been bigots in England who from time to time had strained their power to subvert Presbytery: but their attempts had ended in ridiculous failure; and it was not likely that any attempts which might be made after the Union to accomplish this object would be more successful than those which had preceded it.

With the knowledge that the clergy were in general averse to the Union, the Ministers experienced no slight sense of relief, and the Opposition no small disappointment at finding the requests preferred by the Commission so reasonable and moderate as they proved to be. All that was asked of the Parliament was that the various acts establishing the Presbyterian Church government should be confirmed, and that it should be made a fundamental article and essential condition of the Union that Presbytery should remain and continue unalterably as the only form of Church government within Scotland. The Opposition, although greatly dejected at the mild course taken by an influential party, from whom nothing but violent protests had been expected, endeavoured to make the most of the address by moving that it should be taken into consideration before the articles of Union; but the motion was lost, and an assurance was returned to the Commission that the Parliament would, before anything was concluded, give due

weight to its requests. It seems that the address, in the form in which it was presented, had not been carried in the Commission without some fierce wrangling between the holy men. The bigots, who felt themselves inspired to predict the evils that would ensue from amalgamation with an impure and misguided Government like that of England, were, of course, numerous and vehement. But from some unascertainable cause they were in the minority. Most of the clergy composing the Commission were not unfavourable to the projected Union.

The debates upon the articles were then resumed, and were continued through several sittings amid the howling of a mob, which from morning till night filled the close, and surged under the walls of the Parliament House. Of this mob Hamilton was the delight. Shouts of applause were raised the moment his chair came in sight; and when he returned from the House he was escorted home by thousands of people. "God bless your Grace for standing up against the Union and for Scotland," was the cry that greeted him from all sides. Queensberry, on the other hand, could not venture to approach the Parliament without a guard of soldiers; and he took good care not to protract his stay there until it was dark, for after nightfall the noise and violence of the rabble increased to a fearful pitch. The small town-guard, which usually kept the peace of the streets, probably imitated the prudence of Dogberry, and made no attempt to preserve order. No respectable person could stir abroad without incurring the risk of being hustled and robbed. To appear at a window was dangerous to any gentleman whose skull was not proof against a stone. At one time there was a rumour that the population of all the neighbouring villages and towns would flock into Edinburgh to protest against the carrying away of the regalia to England.* Then there were terrifying reports that the Highlanders were mustering in arms, that the Cameronians of the west were rising, that the people of Glasgow, Dumfries, and Perth were

* Lockhart observes that "nothing so much saved the Union as the season of the year; for had not the Parliament met and sate in the winter, and the weather proved very rainy and tempestuous, it would have been impossible to have kept the country-people from coming to a head from all parts of the kingdom, and tearing in pieces all those who promoted it."

coming up to drive away the soldiers and disperse the Parliament.

In this frightful state of affairs Queensberry never for one moment lost his presence of mind. In addition to the apprehensions that beset the supporters of the Union in general, he was exposed to threats such as might well daunt the courage of a brave man. He received anonymous letters professing to reveal the details of plots for his assassination. He was to be stabbed as he came out of the Parliament House by a man in the garb of a Highlander. If this design failed his coach was to be surrounded by twenty-four conspirators; and while one person dressed like a beggar drew a pistol from beneath his rags and fired at his Grace, the rest, habited some as Highlanders and others as bakers, would raise a crowd with their cries. But the Commissioner was not to be deterred by communications of this kind from repairing to the House at each sitting. The night of the 23rd of October was one long remembered by the people of Edinburgh. Upon the previous evening the rabble, which, as usual, attended Hamilton from the Parliament, had boasted that the next day they would be a thousand times as numerous—that they would pull the traitors out of their houses; and it was noticed the next morning that the close was more densely thronged, and that the crowd seemed more maliciously disposed than upon former occasions. As soon as it was dark the intended work of the night was commenced with an assault upon the house of Sir Patrick Johnstone. This gentleman had been the preceding year provost of Edinburgh, and had in that capacity not been unpopular. But his virtues and merits were now obliterated in the public estimation by his subsequent conduct. He was an ardent Whig, had been one of the Commissioners, and had since zealously supported the Union. The rioters, after smashing the windows of his house, swarmed up a flight of steps leading to the door, and began to batter it with sledge-hammers. The doors of gentlemen's houses in Edinburgh, however, were generally constructed with a view to contingencies of this kind, and the door of Sir Patrick stood the test well. His wife, holding two candles, appeared at a window, and appealed to the crowd. She implored any honest man who

might be present to run and call the guard, and a compassionate apothecary undertook the errand. In a short time the soldiers reached the spot, and the rabble, after saluting them with a shower of stones, dispersed. But the tumult was not yet over. A number of men paraded the streets, beating drums and breaking the windows of unpopular members. Some alarming reports were brought to Queensberry. It was said that the rioters had a design of getting possession of all the gates of the city, and that a thousand sailors from Leith were marching to their assistance. Under these circumstances the Duke sent his guard to occupy the lofty tower gate called the Netherbow, which spanned the High Street, and summoned the Provost to attend him. Two weak Scotch regiments lay in the neighbourhood; but to call in the military for the purpose of quelling disturbances was a measure to which the citizens were not accustomed, and much persuasion was required to convince the Provost of its necessity. The order was, however, dispatched, the troops marched in, and when the citizens awoke next morning detachments were found posted in various quarters of the city, while a strong force kept guard in the Parliament close. The Privy Council met, and issued a proclamation against tumults and rabbles. This, it was ordered, should be published at the market crosses of Edinburgh, Dumfries, Lanark, and Glasgow. An old law provided that in unquiet times the magistrates of towns should convene the deacons of crafts and masters of colleges, and make them give sureties for the good behaviour of their apprentices or scholars. This law was now put in force, and excellent results were not long in appearing; for the apprentices, with their usual love of fun and disorder, had been foremost in exciting the disturbances.

Nothing could well seem more evident than that sheer necessity had forced Queensberry to the invidious step of calling in the military. The probability had been great that, if matters were allowed to take their course, the rabble would shortly administer to the Parliament one of Cromwell's purges, that those members who were friendly to the Union would either be pulled out of their seats or murdered in their homes. Yet the zealots of the Opposition caught eagerly at any occasion to blacken the Commissioner. It is scarcely too much to sup-

pose that upon the violence of the rabble they had placed their chief reliance for defeating the project. As these men, therefore, two days after the night of uproar, passed through the Parliament close, their rage and disappointment were kindled to a flame by the sight of the soldiers. They gave vent to some bitter invectives against Queensberry. The fluctuating Marquis of Annandale, who was for the time being a strenuous opponent of the Union, declared with well-affected indignation that the Parliament was no longer a free one, for that there could be no liberty of speech while the House was overawed by the military. The Earl of Errol, a noted Jacobite, put in a formal protest that the continuing of standing forces within the town of Edinburgh was an encroachment not only upon his own office of High Constable, but also upon the rights and privileges of the town. His protest was subscribed by Hamilton, Athol, Annandale, Fletcher of Saltoun, Lockhart, and forty-six others. It is worthy of note, however, that the protesting party, although including the most prominent names of the Opposition, was very far indeed from representing the entire force of the Opposition, a convincing proof that a large number of the members, while opposed to the Union on various grounds, was determined to have nothing to do with the violence, unreasonableness, and underhand sedition of the leaders. A large majority joined in a vote of thanks to the Commissioner and the Lords of the Privy Council for the precautions they had taken.

The discussion upon the articles which had been interrupted by these proceedings, was then resumed and continued through several sittings until the end of October. Most of the talking was on the side of the Opposition. The Ministers seem to have thought it no bad policy to allow their opponents every opportunity to parade their forces and display their weapons before the day of battle arrived. Some sharp skirmishing did indeed occur between the leaders of the respective hosts. Hamilton, whose strength lay in sarcasm, made a covert but unmistakeable allusion to bribery, the effect of which was to create a dead silence in the hall during some minutes.* Fletcher, in the earnestness of his hatred to the Ministers and Com-

* Boyer.

missioners, lost his temper, accused them of betraying their country, and narrowly escaped being called to the bar to apologise for his expressions. At length the decisive day came. The whole of the articles having been read and discussed, it was on the 1st of November moved that the House should proceed to their further and more particular consideration in order to approve or disallow them, and that it should commence with the first article. The first article was the keystone of the whole system; for it provided that the kingdoms of England and Scotland should, after the 1st of May ensuing, be united into one kingdom to be called Great Britain. It was probable, therefore, that the result of the vote upon the first article would be decisive of the fate of the whole series of articles, and the Opposition made frantic efforts to gain time. A debate began, which the cunning of some orators and the fervour of others protracted through two entire sittings. As fast as one device failed recourse was had to another. It was moved that the consideration of the articles should be postponed, that the members might have the opportunity of ascertaining the sentiments of the English Parliament upon the subject, and the wishes of their own constituents. But this motion was, after much time had been consumed upon it, dropped for another much more likely to recommend itself to the majority. It was urged that the House had already pledged itself to the Commission of the Church to take its address into consideration before concluding anything. Was it not then incumbent upon the House to proceed upon that matter before taking a vote upon the first and most important of the articles of Union? The argument struck home. There were in the Parliament abundance of men zealous for the Union; but of these men there were few whose first and foremost thought was not for the security of the Church. The Ministers understood well the feelings of their supporters, and steered their course with consummate skill. They consented to add to their motion that the House should proceed to a vote upon the first article a proviso that immediately after the vote had been taken an Act should be brought in for the security of the Church. The Opposition then perceived that all further resistance would be useless.

In the course of these debates two speeches were delivered from opposite sides of the House, which have fortunately been preserved almost entire, and may at this day be read by a generation in possession of the silent judgment which Time has pronounced upon the question in dispute, a question indeed the most important that has ever affected the interests of the British nation. The speech in favour of the Union was delivered by William Seton of Pitmedden, who had been one of the Commissioners, and it cannot be deemed otherwise than a masterpiece of clear, practical, and exhaustive reasoning. There were three courses, he said, open to Scotland under her present circumstances. She might continue, as now, under the same sovereign as England, merely requiring some limitations to the prerogative; or she might separate from England altogether; or she might effect an entire incorporating Union with her. Suppose the first course were adopted, and that the sovereign consented to surrender to the Parliament of Scotland the power of making peace and war, of rewarding and punishing individuals, of appointing officers to the various departments of government, of levying troops, would the Scottish people benefit in any way by such an arrangement? Would it make them a penny richer? Was it likely to increase their trade? In the first place, it would be folly for any nation to send much commerce to sea without having a powerful fleet to protect it; and Scotland had no fleet whatever. But it was, moreover, apparent, that the most lucrative traffic of the globe was already absorbed by one great nation or another. The English and Dutch divided between them the commerce of the Indies, and would, with little doubt, unite to fall upon any fresh competitor who entered the field. Every part of the American continent was claimed by some European state. If Scotland, therefore, endeavoured to trade on her own foundation she must confine herself to the countries nearer home; and even here her efforts would be met with rivalry that would probably be found overwhelming. What commodities could Scotch merchants supply to foreign markets which English and Dutch merchants, commanding ten times their means and enjoying far greater facilities of producing and carrying goods, could not supply cheaper and better? There was every reason

to anticipate also that the English, embittered by national jealousy, would exert themselves to the utmost to undersell and ruin their aspiring rivals. Suppose then that the second alternative were chosen, and that Scotland should determine to separate altogether from England. It would be obviously necessary for her in that case to contract a close alliance with some powerful neighbouring nation, both to procure the assistance she needed to her trade and for her protection. But where was a suitable alliance to be found? With Holland a partnership was almost out of the question; for Nature herself might seem to have intended that the Dutch and the Scotch should be rivals. Fishing was the principal source of profit to both nations, and it was inconceivable how any arrangements could be made that would not redound chiefly to the advantage of the Dutch, who had infinitely more people and more vessels engaged in the business. An alliance with France would be certain to provoke a war with England. Putting the extreme case that Scotland should, with the aid of the French armies, succeed in conquering England, what would be the result? England would still be the richer, the more populous, the better situated of the two kingdoms. The Scottish conqueror would find it desirable for numerous reasons to fix his court in the south, would soon grow English in interest, and eventually in feeling, and Scotland would not have improved her position in the least. A federal union with England, in which each kingdom should retain its separate government, was an arrangement to which many persons were partial;* but it would not suffice. England would not communicate her trading privileges to Scotchmen, and the protection of her fleet to Scottish commerce, unless she were empowered to guard the coast against foreign invaders and to secure the peace of the country by her armies. There remained then but one suitable course to pursue, and that was to have an entire incorporating union with England. The advantages of the measure would be the admission of Scotchmen to the many roads to wealth enjoyed by England, and the security of liberty, property, and religion, under one sovereign and one Parliament.

* Many of the Scottish Commissioners seem to have been partial to this scheme at the commencement of the conferences in London.

From this clear and convincing rhetoric, from this well-founded augury of the prosperity that would ensue from the Union, we turn with amazement to the spectacle of the eloquent Lord Belhaven weeping over the future of his country. A train of visions, melancholy as those which the archangel inspired in fallen Adam, flitted through his mind. He saw an ancient kingdom yielding up its freedom and independence, a national Church, founded on a rock and fenced about with every legal security the wit of man could devise, voluntarily descending into the plain and putting itself on a level with Jews, Papists, Socinians, Arminians, and Anabaptists. He saw the honourable peers of Scotland, whose fathers led armies of their own vassals to battle, destitute of followers, and loitering with the mien of attorneys about the Court of Requests, their swords laid aside in the presence of an English peer for fear lest they might be tempted to draw them on a privileged person. He saw the great MacCallum More himself held in less veneration than an English exciseman. He saw the barons, those bold assertors of liberty in the worst times of tyranny, setting a watch on their lips lest they might give offence to the higher powers; the inhabitants of the royal boroughs pacing their deserted streets, brooding over their decayed trade, and thinking in the extremity of hunger of turning apprentices to the neighbours who had ruined them. He saw the judges abandoning the study of their own precedents for that of the English common law. He saw the gallant soldiers of Scotland turned adrift to beg their bread or shipped off for slavery in the plantations; the honest hard-working tradesmen, bowed down by the load of taxation, drinking water in the place of ale, and eating their pottage without salt. Finally, he saw Caledonia herself, the ancient mother of them all, sitting disconsolately in the senate, covering her face to await the fatal blow, and complaining only that it should be dealt her by the hands of her own children.

And this was positively the sum of all that the Opposition had to say against the Union. Reasoning, it seems, was to be confuted by prophecies, and arguments by poetical images and pathetic remonstrances urged in broken tones of woe. The orator appropriately concluded with a flood of tears. March-

mont then rose. He had heard a long discourse, he said, and a very terrible one. He thought, however, that a short answer would suffice, and he would give it in the words of Scripture: "Solomon awoke, and behold! it was a dream."

It remained only for the Opposition to protest against that Union which they were powerless to prevent; and a formal document was accordingly put in by Athol. An incorporating Union, ran this protest, was contrary to the honour, interest, fundamental laws and constitution of Scotland, the birthright of the Peers, the rights and privileges of the barons and boroughs, and to several acts of the Parliament. Sixty-five members adhered to the protest. The vote was then taken upon the first article of the Union, and the result was its adoption by forty-six nobles, thirty-seven barons, and thirty-three borough members. Twenty-one nobles, thirty-three barons, and twenty-nine borough members were for the rejection of the article. The approvers had thus the majority by thirty-three votes. It was not a little remarkable, and to pious minds the circumstance suggested something more than the blind work of chance, that the passing of the first article of the Union, a work so eminently calculated to insure the Protestant succession, took place upon the double anniversary of William's birthday and of his landing in Torbay, the 4th of November.

In accordance with the pledge given by the Ministers, an act for the security of the Church was now brought in, was read a first time, and became a subject of debate at several subsequent sittings. A temporary lull succeeded to the stormy days which had just passed; but it was soon evident that the opponents of the Union, although somewhat exhausted and much crestfallen, were determined to continue the struggle. One powerful stimulus to fresh exertion was indeed constantly administered to them. Each day as the leaders of the party, mortified by their failure within the walls of the Parliament, retired to their homes, the crowd outside received them with shouts of applause. The victors in the contest, on the other hand, stole away like guilty creatures through files of protecting soldiers, and thought themselves lucky if they reached their dwellings unnoticed. Addresses against the Union poured into the Parliament by dozens, from every corner of

the kingdom and from every class of the people; from the barons of shires, from the magistrates of boroughs, and from the heads of families in parishes. To affirm that these addresses were simply due to the influence of a few powerful chieftains is certainly an untrue statement of the case. It is not difficult to enter into the feelings with which the bulk of the nation, composed as every nation must be of one person who weighs and reflects, and of ninety and nine persons to whom passions and prejudices stand in the place of reason, would naturally regard such a question as that of the Union. The pride of Scotchmen was deeply wounded. They were to cease to exist as a separate, independent nation. They were to be incorporated with a people whom they had regarded through immemorial centuries with a sentiment compounded of jealousy and distrust, a people who despised their religion and scoffed at their poverty. And what guarantee was there that even the articles would be long observed? It was a natural presumption that the power which was superior in population and wealth would endeavour to enslave the inferior; and it might be therefore that the personal liberty of Scotchmen would only last until all the strongholds of the country were, under one pretext or another, occupied by the forces of England and the coasts blockaded by the English fleet. Then, again, taxation was to be raised to a level with that of the southern kingdom, and the prospect might well terrify the most hopeful mind. How could it be possible for a people eking out little better than a bare subsistence under present imposts to continue the struggle under burdens of far greater magnitude? There could be but one result of such an arrangement—the reduction of the entire nation to beggary and starvation. It would have been strange, indeed, if men, whose feelings were at once exacerbated against England by pride and mistrust, and whose imaginations teemed with pictures of personal ruin and national slavery, should have been able to regard the promoters of the Union in any other light than as traitors to their country.

For the security of the Church of Scotland the Ministers were perfectly willing to pass any law which might satisfy the Parliament without offending that sensitive jealousy which was entertained in England on the subject of religion. The act there-

fore which they brought forward provided that the government of the Church by sessions and presbyteries in the manner established by previous acts of Parliament should remain unalterable, that this act should be inserted in the English act concluding the compact between the two countries, and should ever afterwards be regarded as a fundamental and essential condition of the Union. The Opposition formally but in vain protested against this measure as providing no valid security whatever to the Church. It is obvious indeed that, as the Parliament of the United Kingdom was thereafter to be constituted, no positive material guarantee could be given that any one condition of the treaty would be faithfully observed. There would always remain a speculative possibility that the Parliament might, as soon as Scotland was well within the grasp of the English forces, pass an act repudiating all the articles of the Union. In the same style a public fundholder might argue that, unless a majority of the Commons were national creditors, there was no security against repudiation of the national debt.

In the form of a representation and petition the Commission of the Church suggested several matters to the consideration of the Parliament. The most important of these was that the operation of the English Test Act would exclude every rigid Presbyterian, whose conscience deterred him from receiving the Sacrament in the form prescribed by the Church of England, from holding any place, civil or military, in the southern kingdom, while there was no counter Presbyterian Test Act to exclude members of the Church of England from holding places in Scotland. It followed therefore that places in Scotland would be open to Englishmen, while conscientious Scotchmen would be unable to obtain places in England. Under these circumstances it seemed fair to require one alternative of three courses,—either that a Test Act should be at once enacted for Scotland, or that the English Parliament should be required to repeal its own Test Act, or should at least enact a proviso to exempt Scotchmen from its operation. A clause embodying this last alternative was offered by Belhaven as an addition to the Act of Security, but was rejected by a majority of thirty-nine votes. It is not a little significant of the anxiety felt by the supporters of the Union to attain their end that this clause,

in which justice was for once plainly on the side of the Opposition, and which strongly appealed to national pride, should have been negatived for no imaginable reason but that it would give offence to the English Parliament.

The second article of the Union, which established the succession to the crown in the Princess Sophia and her heirs, was carried after a feeble attempt by the Opposition to substitute the formerly popular scheme of settling the succession in the Protestant line with limitations upon the power of the sovereign. Many members, who had in previous sessions been favourable to this plan, had now passed over to the Government side; and the Opposition was divided in itself, as the Jacobites could not support any proposition for alienating the crown from King James. The union of the two Parliaments, which was the subject of the third article, occasioned an animated debate, which protracted the sitting beyond the close of the short winter's day, and thus entailed upon unpopular personages the disagreeable and even dangerous work of getting home in the dark. Queensberry had been sufficiently warned by his daily greetings from the rabble that his person would not be safe in the streets by night; yet he courageously remained at his post until the third article had been carried. He then sought his coach. A terrific shout was raised as the well-known vehicle emerged from the Parliament close. It was as usual accompanied by a mounted escort; but the mob made a rush at the soldiers, and the Commissioner was for a few moments in imminent peril. 'At this conjuncture the coachman, with great presence of mind, lashed his horses into a gallop: the cavalcade tore down the High Street amid a shower of stones and brickbats, and reached Holyrood in safety. One of his Grace's footmen, who had been left behind in the confusion, received the beating which the mob had designed to inflict upon his master.*

But the framework had been established of that measure which was to fuse England and Scotland into a single kingdom under one sovereign and one united Parliament, and it now remained only to discuss the details. A season of intense anxiety

* All the details of the debates, interspersed with accounts of the popular tumults, are given by Defoe. I have derived some particulars from the Lettres Historiques and Boyer.

followed. The whole country was in agitation. There were riots in all the Principal towns. An insurrection of the Cameronians actually occurred, of which it may be proper to give some particulars.

The Cameronians were a religious sect, deriving the name from one of their preachers.* They were thickly spread through Lanark, Ayr, and the western counties, and prided themselves upon being the faithful remnant of that true Presbyterian Church which, in the days of the rebellion, had covered all Scotland with the pure robe of godliness. That form of ecclesiastical government had been abolished at the Restoration; the despot who reigned in London had decreed the re-establishment of Prelacy; and the Presbyterian ministers had been ejected from their livings. Their faithful and conscientious flocks, however, chose to seek their former pastors in the open fields in preference to hearing the word of God in churches presided over by Government hirelings. This they did at the peril of their lives. The soldiers of Charles hunted down the zealots with a ferocity not exceeded by the dragoons of Louis. But persecution failed, as usual, to extinguish that passion for liberty which seems to be the cause of dissent; and after wading in blood for years the Government became at length sensible that a resolute people must be humoured rather than coerced into submission. An indulgence was offered the Presbyterians on certain conditions; and a considerable number of them, weary of the dangers and discomforts attaching to rebellion, accepted the terms. But there still remained a large proportion of men who, with minds infuriated by suffering, resolutely refused all compromise; and against this remnant the Government recommenced its system of shooting, drowning, and hanging. Hints were given to the savages of the Highlands that they might plunder and shed blood in the land of this people with impunity; and the clans availed themselves of the permission to the full extent of their power. The consequence was

* Richard Cameron. But it is not easy to understand how the sect came to be called by his name. The following notice of the Cameronians must be understood as referring to the Covenanters or Whigs, in fact, to all the fanatics of the period in the south and west of Scotland. That professor of religion who ordained Cameron enjoined upon him a mission, scarcely conceived in an evangelical spirit:—"Go forth, Ritchie," said he, "and set the fire of hell to their tails."—(Scott's Worthies of Scotland.)

that when, at the Revolution, the Presbyterian Church was restored, the Cameronians remained as a sect divided from the great body of their countrymen, not so much by any differences upon religious points as by the remembrance of the greater sufferings they had endured in the cause, and the proud thought that they alone had never once bowed the knee to man's authority. Ill treatment, in fact, had rendered the habit of dissent chronic in their minds. Long after all fear of being molested in the practice of their mysteries had passed away they continued to comport themselves as if the soldiers of Dundee were on their track. They would attend no licensed place of worship, but retained their preference for open-air meetings. Their preachers still kept up that fierceness of style which they had formerly employed to animate their votaries; and no doubt it was the regret of the latter that there remained no enemy to interfere with them, no man of blood to overcome with the help of the Lord, or whom, if conquered themselves, they might mortify by the patience and resignation they could exhibit under torture.*

The Cameronian preachers shared all that hatred which was generally entertained by their milder brethren of the Established Church against the Union, and their authority over their followers was boundless. The flame was cunningly fanned by two or three Jacobite agents. But it needed not much argument to incite to violent courses a sect of men whose leading principle was hostility to the civil authority; and a scheme was soon hatching for a march to Edinburgh. The Cameronians were assured that they might depend upon being joined by a body of Highlanders when they had got half way to the capital. This information was tendered by their Jacobite acquaintances, who would have acted more wisely in keeping it back. The sect, although very desirous of preventing the Union, had no fancy for co-operating with a people against whom they still cherished deadly animosity, and who could have no other object in an insurrection than that of restoring a Popish sovereign. Some of their principal men held, however, a meeting at Sanquhar, in the county of Dumfries, and consulted as to what should be done. There was a traitor among them.

* This account is taken principally from Burnet.

Queensberry had received a warning that something was planning among the Cameronians, and had promptly secured the services of a gentleman named Ker, whose family was of some note in the sect. The spy reported that the meeting was unanimous for a rising, and that to prevent suspicion he himself had feigned to acquiesce in the resolution. A few houses belonging to obnoxious individuals, he added, would probably be set on fire in different parts of the country, but he believed he could find means to hinder the insurgents from taking any course dangerous to the Government. Some results of the meeting were not long in appearing. A strong party of horsemen rode into the town of Dumfries, drew up round the market cross, lighted a fire, and amidst a flourish of trumpets committed to the flames a copy of the Articles of Union. The intelligence of this affair was received in Edinburgh almost concurrently with reports that several of the towns in Lanark had risen. Glasgow in particular was actually in the power of the insurgents. The Provost, for refusing to join in an address against the Union, had been attacked, but had made his escape. The shops of the gunsmiths had been broken open and pillaged. The streets were full of armed men, swaggering about and swearing that they were going to march to Edinburgh. One half-crazy Jacobite, named Finlay, who had been a sergeant in the army and served in Flanders, had gone out with about fifty rascals at his heels to join a body of Highlanders that was rumoured to be marching on the capital.*

Queensberry showed himself fully equal to the occasion. His first measure was to despatch to Glasgow a regiment of dragoons, and the first act of the dragoons upon reaching that city was to arrest Finlay and some of his comrades, who had returned home much disappointed at finding they had been deceived about the Highlanders. Meanwhile a motion was carried in Parliament, though not without remonstrance from some members of the Opposition, to suspend that clause in the Act of Security which enjoined upon the nobility and gentry to muster and exercise their fencible men. The attitude, however, maintained by the Cameronians still caused grave anxiety to the Ministers. Their

* Memoirs of Ker of Kersland; Lockhart; Defoe; Burnet; Lettres Historiques; Boyer.

numbers and their enthusiasm rendered them formidable, and they had recently, it was gathered through the spies, entered into a compact with Hamilton, who had consented to be their leader. Their plan was already formed. They were to assemble in arms at the town of Hamilton, where they would be joined by Athol with a force of Highlanders, and the united party would then march up to Edinburgh. There can be little doubt that at this conjuncture the Duke held in his hands the fate of his country. A word from him would have brought upon the Parliament a force sufficient to have dragged the supporters of the Union from their seats; but fortunately he was not the man to embark in a policy which might cost him his estate and his life. As the day fixed for the assembling drew near he despatched expresses to the Cameronians urging the postponement of the project. It was abandoned, and never revived.*

The cause of the Opposition was, by this failure of a combined Cameronian and Highland rising, rendered well-nigh desperate. One article was being passed after another, and it was beyond doubt that, so determined was a majority of the House upon concluding the Union, no arguments or Parliamentary tactics would be of any avail. Several meetings were held to consider what course should be adopted in this emergency. One plan proposed either by Athol or Fletcher of Saltoun was that all the gentlemen of Scotland who were against the Union should be invited to assemble at Edinburgh for the purpose of signing an address to her Majesty, imploring her to discountenance the project as being held in general abhorrence by her Scottish subjects. This plan was put in execution: letters were despatched to all accessible parts of the kingdom, and towards the close of the year there was a great concourse of respectable and influential persons in the capital. But Hamilton, who had favoured the scheme up to this point, now began, after his usual fashion, to work for its frustration. He would have no concern, he said, in any address which did not include a clause intimating the willingness of the subscribers to settle the succession upon the house of Hanover. To this the Jacobites could not agree, and while time was uselessly consumed in altercations, the country gentlemen, whose purses were not well

* Lockhart's Memoirs.

stocked, and who found themselves spending their money at a great rate in Edinburgh, concluded that they had been hoaxed, and quietly went back to their homes. Then another plan was discussed, in pursuance of which the whole force of the opposing members was, after giving in a formal protest against the Union, to withdraw from the Parliament. The English Houses, it was presumed, would scarcely venture to treat the acts of the remnant as the acts of the representative body of Scotland. But again the vacillating or perfidious Duke was the means of ruining the scheme. When the day came for presenting the protest he had the toothache, and could not leave his house. In reply to the remonstrances and entreaties of his followers he at length declared that, although he himself must refuse to present the protest, if any other person would take the responsibility, he would be the first man to subscribe. But no one of sufficient influence could be found willing to take the initiative.* In truth, the members opposed to the Union were divided among themselves upon a question which admitted of no compromise. Between men who were for the Hanoverian succession and men who were for the restoration of James there could be no combination, no understanding, no mutual trust.

Meanwhile the Parliament had continued its labours with such assiduity that between the 19th of November, when the third article was passed, and the 14th of January, when the last of the twenty-five articles was carried, the House sat on no less than thirty-six days. The duty of inquiring into the provisions relating to trade, taxation and the equivalent, was delegated to a committee, who consulted such advisers and examined such witnesses as it pleased. Among these was Defoe. The English Government had cruelly persecuted him, set him in the pillory, shut him up in Newgate, and utterly ruined his pecuniary prospects; but his was not a nature to bear malice. He had not been long released when Godolphin bethought him that the ready brain and great knowledge of the poor author in matters of trade and finance might be of service. Defoe was summoned to court, presented to Anne, and heard from her a few gracious words which may have been intended as an atonement for past rigours. He was then sent down to

* Lockhart's Memoirs.

Scotland with instructions, it would seem, to promote the Union by such means as he should think best both without and within the Parliament. The former part of his duties he endeavoured to accomplish by publishing a poem entitled "Caledonia;" but several papers of calculations which he drew up for the guidance of the Committee probably rendered much more effective service to the cause. In the end the reports of the Committee led to the adoption by the House of a few alterations in the articles; but the fundamentals were not disturbed. On the 16th of January, 1707, Queensberry had the satisfaction of touching with the sceptre the Act of Security for the Church, and the Act ratifying the treaty of Union. The great work, so far as the Scottish Parliament was concerned, was accomplished.

There remained still a few matters to discuss in relation to this subject. It was decided that the sixteen Peers should be elected to serve in each Parliament, and not, as was desired by some, that all the Peers should serve in rotation. In apportioning the seats allowed to the Commons, thirty were given to the shires and fifteen to the boroughs. The pressure of private business kept the Parliament sitting until the 25th of March; but upon that day Queensberry visited the House in state, passed a series of Acts, and then, with the usual formalities, announced a prorogation to the 22nd of April. The Parliament of Scotland never met again.

CHAPTER XIV.

In the meantime the articles as amended in Scotland and the Act ratifying the treaty of Union had been transmitted to London and laid before both Houses of Parliament. The Order in Council against the laying of wagers about the Union had given rise to a general belief that the Houses would not be summoned to meet until matters had been settled in the northern kingdom.* If the Ministers were of opinion that private betting upon the event would have an inflammatory effect upon Scottish parties, with what apprehension, it was imagined, must they look forward to speeches in Parliament by members averse to the Union! But Christmas was approaching; the struggle at Edinburgh was still raging fiercely, and might be protracted for months longer; and there was a paramount necessity for getting the supplies voted for the forthcoming year. Godolphin and his colleagues were compelled, therefore, to forego their intention, if intention it really had been, of delaying the meeting of Parliament. It was opened by Anne on the 3rd of December.

It was not long before the composition of the Houses had revealed itself. The Whigs, it was evident, had made progress in the Lower Chamber, were still predominant in the Upper, and the party generally was on good terms with the Government, and prepared to support its two chief undertakings, the war and the Union. In answer to the royal speech, the Commons congratulated her Majesty upon the signal victory of her arms at Ramilies under the command of the Duke of Marlborough. No specious offers of peace, they declared, should divert them from their steady resolution of enabling their sovereign to improve the advantages of that successful

* Boyer.

campaign. Their experience, moreover, of the prudent administration, and great care taken in the management of the public money, was an encouragement to them to give such speedy and effectual supplies as, with the continuance of God's blessing, would serve to establish the balance of power in Europe by a safe, honourable, and lasting peace. The address did not conclude without an expression of thanks to Her Majesty for the pains she had taken in promoting the Union. The congratulations of the Lords upon the manifold successes of this wonderful year were expressed with still greater exuberance, and they referred with particular satisfaction to the declaration that had fallen from her Majesty's lips that no negotiations for peace would be entertained by her, except in conjunction with all the members of the Grand Alliance. That was the proper method, they remarked, to remove all existing jealousies, and to create in the minds of the Allies a firm reliance upon her Majesty's honour and justice.*

A compact, in truth, had been concluded between the Ministers and the Whigs, and there seemed now a fair chance that matters would in future go smoothly in Parliament. The terms of that compact it remains to relate. The last four months had been a season of trying anxiety to Godolphin. Up to the very day when the Houses assembled he had been uncertain of the support of that great party without which his Government could not possibly have sustained itself. The Whigs were now contented; but the price which had been paid for their contentation was, as yet, not adequately realized by him nor even by Marlborough. That it was nothing less than the loss of the Queen's personal affection, that that loss would eventually lead to the ignominious dismissal of both the friends, to the ruin of that great and intellectual party which was the main support of the Alliance, to the salvation of Philip's throne, to the retrieval of the French king's affairs when at the direst extremity, and to the nullification of the successes of ten years of warfare, were events which could have been foreseen by no human genius.

The Whig leaders, now fully conscious of their power, had been gradually becoming more and more imperious and exact-

* Parliamentary History.

ing in their demands. Last year they had obtained the promotion of Cowper, and by so doing had thrust their first wedge into the Tory administration. Not without great difficulty had Anne been brought to allow of the substitution of this upright and accomplished man for the mean and absurd creature who then held the seals. For Wright, whatever lawyers might think of him, and however Peers of loose opinions might affect to despise him, had in the Queen's eyes one overpowering recommendation. He was a Tory, and disposed to go any lengths for the advantage of the Church, while Cowper, with all his merits, was still a Whig. The polished manners, the soft tones, the handsome person of the new Lord Keeper had in six months gone far to obliterate the first sad prognostications Anne had formed of the evil that was likely to ensue to herself and her people by admitting to power a member of the wrong party, when she was thrown into a state of dismay by a new demand that was made upon her conscience. She was told that the Whigs insisted upon the removal of Sir Charles Hedges from the secretaryship and the appointment of Lord Sunderland, Marlborough's son-in-law, to the office. Of this nobleman Anne had naturally seen and heard much, and she held him in horror. It was not only that he was a Whig, and a Whig of such extreme colour that his very friends suspected him of inclining to republicanism in his political views, and to Dissent or to a still worse depth in his religious speculations. He was notoriously a man of rough manners and violent temper. To be forced to see continually on business a Secretary whose opinions differed entirely from her own, and who, if she dared to oppose him, might be rude to her, was truly a prospect from which a timid lady might shrink. The Marlboroughs had, in the first years of her reign, frequently cautioned her against placing herself in the hands of a party. Was it not, remonstrated the poor Queen, the strongest evidence that she was in the hands of a party when she was forced to choose men whom she disliked for her servants?* Godolphin's reply to her objections was respectful, but firm.† Sunderland, he said,

* The Queen to Godolphin, September 21, October 2; Godolphin to the Queen, September 25, October 6; Conduct of the Duchess; Coxe's Memoirs.

† Marlborough to the Duchess, August 9—20.

was determined to have the place, and his all-powerful friends had plainly intimated that they would support his demand. Unless her Majesty would give way he saw no other course before him than to resign. The Duchess, who was as utterly incapable of comprehending how anyone could be dull enough to be a Tory, as Anne was incapable of understanding how people could reconcile it with their consciences to be Whigs, recommenced her lectures with so much freedom as to excite anger even in the breast of the affectionate and confiding Mrs. Morley. Had Anne been a poor seamstress instead of a great Queen, the pert arrogance with which her friend now thought fit to season her letters must have awakened resentment. She complained of the Duchess's language to Godolphin, who, by much persuasion, prevailed upon the haughty Mrs. Freeman to explain the meaning of her remarks.* But her explanation was almost as insulting in its tone as the epistle which had caused the outbreak. The Queen was in despair. Finding everyone against her she wrote to Marlborough, in the hope that he might view the matter in a light more favourable to her than people at home, but his answer conveyed no comfort to her heart. He regarded, indeed, the project of the Whigs in forcing Sunderland into the administration with regret and misgiving; but the party was evidently determined to carry their point, and without their demands were satisfied the supplies might be delayed. Still Anne continued inflexible. If Sunderland's friends would be satisfied with his being made a privy councillor with a pension, with his being put into an office of greater emolument than the one he coveted, with his having any post, in short, except one which would bring him into constant personal intercourse with herself, she would endeavour to gratify them. The Whigs rejected the compromise, and their tyranny aroused in Anne as much indignation as she was capable of feeling. "It is very hard," she complained, "that men of sense and honour will not promote the welfare of their country without everything is done as they desire. Why must I, who have no interest, no end, no thought but for the good of my subjects be made so miserable?" Between her dread of having Sunderland for her Secretary, and

* The Queen to Godolphin, August 30, September 10.

her dread of receiving the resignation of Godolphin, she wavered until Marlborough returned to England, and it would seem that even the entreaties he made in person for some time failed of success, for Sunderland's appointment to the secretaryship was not announced until the 3rd of December, the day on which the Parliament assembled.

The Commons speedily redeemed their promises as to the supplies. As soon as the usual vote of thanks to Marlborough had passed, the House went into committee, and in a few days a series of resolutions had authorized the continuance of the sea and land services upon the same footing as they had stood in the year just expiring. The necessary bills re-imposing the land and several war taxes passed through Parliament so quickly that before the Christmas recess they were in a condition to receive the royal assent. In presenting them to Anne the Speaker remarked that, in the same manner as the Duke of Marlborough had beaten the French before they supposed he was in the field, the Commons had granted her Majesty supplies before her enemies could hear that they had assembled.*

The accounts which had reached England of the state of public feeling in Scotland were such as might well breed a doubt whether an Union apparently odious to the nation at large, but which a majority of its representatives in Parliament seemed determined to carry, could be attended with any real advantage to either kingdom. In the face of addresses against the measure sent up to Edinburgh from all parts of the country and from all classes of society, while from not one single parish came a word in its favour; of the commotions in all the large towns; of the circumstance that it had been found necessary to call in the military to protect the persons of the High Commissioner and his friends; and of the reports that a large force was each day expected to march upon the capital for the purpose of purging the Parliament of the traitors who had sold the independence of their country, it was impossible to conclude otherwise than that the Estates were acting in direct opposition to the popular inclinations. That men would not incur the risk of outraging public feeling for nothing, was the view then

* Boyer.

taken by most Englishmen; and the suspicion that bribery was in one form or another extensively employed to corrupt the last Parliament of Scotland is by no means extinct at the present day.* The gravest doubts might well be entertained whether this Union, which was the work of little more than a hundred interested persons, could long be supported against the wishes of the entire nation. The first tax-gatherer who crossed the border would probably produce a terrific explosion: the two kingdoms would again be torn asunder, and the gap between them would be made more impassable than ever. Still a general opinion prevailed that if the Union could be maintained for a length of time sufficient for Scotchmen to taste and appreciate the commercial advantages held out to them, the measure would be found beneficial to both countries. There was indeed no want of alarmists to predict that the sixty-one Scotchmen who were to be added to the legislature, and who, it was to be presumed, would be all zealous Presbyterians, would be sufficient, when their voices were joined with those of the lukewarm Churchmen of the Whig party, to turn the balance against our religious establishment. Those Tories who were bent on opposing the Union judiciously selected this ground as their battle-field. For in a discussion upon the political and commercial merits of the Union they were modest enough to feel that they were no match for their adversaries: but arguments to prove that the Church was in danger could not fail to reach the hearts of their countrymen. Anxiety was naturally felt by this party to have its say before the work was consummated in Scotland, and while hostile speeches in the English Parliament might give encouragement to the opposition there. Nottingham accordingly endeavoured, when the Houses reassembled after the Christmas recess, to open a debate by moving for papers relating to the Union. The motion was, however, negatived by a large majority.†

Before the end of January the Act of Ratification, which had been passed in Scotland, reached London. That, and the articles of Union, were at once communicated to the Commons;

* See the remarks in Hallam's Constitutional History about the "gross prostitution of the Parliament;" also some comments in Smyth's Lectures on English History.

† Boyer.

and on the 3rd of February the subject was taken into consideration by a committee of the whole House.

The first speaker was Charles Cæsar, an irate and unguarded Tory, who, for a sarcasm upon Godolphin, had been made, a year before, to pass his Christmas in the Tower. His punishment had apparently taught him the wisdom of curbing his temper, and upon this occasion he delivered his objections to the Union with becoming modesty. But a Tory of congenial spirit, Sir John Packington, was near getting into trouble. "I am absolutely against this incorporating Union," he broke out. "It is like marrying a woman without her consent. A measure conducted by bribery and corruption within doors, and by force and violence without——" It was fortunate for the orator that at this stage he was interrupted by the loud clamours which were raised by the friends of the Ministers and the Commissioners. As soon as the tumult had subsided, he endeavoured to bring his words within rules. He had heard it said that the Union was carried in Scotland by bribery and violence, and assuming this to be the case, were persons who had betrayed their trust fit to sit in that House? The explanation might not have been deemed satisfactory had not the supporters of the Union been conscious of the helplessness of their opponents. They were thus in high good humour, and indisposed to waste time in motions beside the main question. Before the House separated on that day, the first four articles had been approved. All the remaining articles were read and disposed of at the next sitting. Cries of "Post haste! post haste!" were occasionally raised by some angry and disappointed Tories. "For my part," replied a jovial Sussexshire baronet, "I think it good policy when the roads are good, the weather fair, and the horses fresh, to keep jogging on till nightfall." *

The spirits of the Tories revived a little when an act for securing the Church of England, which had been passed by the Upper House, came on for consideration. For incapable as they might feel themselves to argue upon questions of taxation and trade with the Whigs, who included in their ranks all the

* Parliamentary History; Boyer. Even Burnet mildly censures the careless speed with which a measure of such importance was hurried through the Lower House.

financial and commercial luminaries of the age, the province of religion they claimed as peculiarly their own. This act, which, similarly to the act for securing the Church in Scotland, was to form a fundamental condition of the Union,* provided that every succeeding sovereign should, in the coronation oath, engage to maintain inviolate the national establishment. The Tories moved that the oath should include an additional engagement to uphold the Corporation and Test Acts as being essential to its security; but they failed to carry their point. Had they been successful, it is curious to think what a difficulty might one day have arisen between a Parliament reflecting the intelligence of a more tolerant generation and a sovereign irrevocably pledged to shut all the doors of preferment in the faces of Nonconformists.

Meanwhile, in the Upper House some of the Tory peers had offered to the Union an opposition which, although unsuccessful, had at least the effect of giving to the proceedings the character of debates. Rochester, Nottingham, and Haversham were, indeed, orators whom it was impossible to dispose of with the same facility as the Commons had suffocated such speakers as Packington, Cæsar, or Bromley. The chairman of the committee was Burnet. The most persistent objector to almost every one of the articles was Nottingham. The replies came chiefly from Somers and Halifax. By one Peer the union of two nations possessing dissimilar laws and dissimilar forms of worship was compared to the combination of iron and clay in the toes of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. By another it was likened to the intermixture of antagonistic liquids, which would ferment and burst the vessel that contained them. The opinion of the judges was taken upon the point, whether the alterations contemplated by the Union were not such an innovation in the monarchy as subverted all the laws of England. They answered unanimously in the negative. Nottingham would, however, have been debarred from employing a fine dramatic effect which he had prepared for the closing scene of the debate, had he admitted that his mind was now easier upon this subject. When the last article had been approved he rose, and begged

* But the government of the Church was not, as in the Scotch act, declared to be inalterable. Some exceptions were, in consequence, taken to the bill.

pardon of their lordships for the trouble he had given. His conscience, he declared, had impelled him to make so many objections. Old Sir John Maynard had once said to King William that, having buried all his contemporaries in the law, he should have had to assist in burying the laws themselves but for the opportune arrival of his Majesty. His own fate had been less happy. He had lived to see the Union passed, and had thus survived the laws and constitution of his country. "I pray God," he concluded, "that he will avert from us the dire effects which will but too probably ensue from this incorporating Union."*

The act of ratification was drawn by Simon Harcourt, who was then Clerk of the Crown, and is said to have been designedly framed so as to preclude all further discussion upon the terms of Union.† It recited the articles as passed in the Scottish Parliament, and the two acts for securing the respective Churches, and then enacted in a single clause the ratification and confirmation of the whole. No choice was thus left between voting for or against the entire Union. In the Commons the act passed by two hundred and seventy-four voices against a hundred and sixteen. The numbers in the Lords upon the final division are not recorded; but there had been several previous divisions upon different articles, and the average proportions were about seventy against twenty. Fourteen Peers recorded the reasons of their dissenting from the majority. ‡

Upon the 6th of March Anne came to the Parliament, passed the act in the usual form, and intimated, in a speech to both Houses, the satisfaction she had felt in giving her assent to it. "I desire and expect from all my subjects of both nations," she said, "that from henceforth they act with all possible respect and kindness to one another, that it may appear to all the world that they have hearts disposed to become one people."

A month after the delivery of this speech the Commons were thrown into a state of uneasiness by the representation to them of a point which had been either overlooked or treated as unworthy of consideration by the framers of the treaty. The

* Boyer. † Burnet. ‡ The protests are given by Boyer.

day upon which the Union was to commence had been fixed for the 1st of May, and until that period the tariffs prevailing in each kingdom upon imported merchandise were to continue. It was consequently in the power of any person to ship goods for Scottish ports, where they might be landed at low rates, and, as soon as the Union was complete, to re-ship them into England, where no further duty could be demanded. Those merchants engaged in the foreign trade whose consignments were already on the seas to this country, complained vehemently of the hardship they would sustain if vigilant and quick-witted traders should take advantage of this golden opportunity; and their cause was at once espoused by the Commons. A bill was quickly passed to prohibit the free importation into England of goods landed in Scotland within a short period of the Union, and would have been sent up for the royal assent but for the interposition of the Lords, who in this instance showed a high degree of political wisdom. It was reasonably apprehended that any restrictions upon the passage of merchandise between the two kingdoms would give rise to misunderstandings, which at this critical period it was of the highest importance to avoid. The losses, if any, which the merchants might sustain would be felt by only a few persons; and the very fear which the action of the Commons would engender in the minds of those who were meditating the speculation would be likely to produce all the effect which the bill could produce if it became law. The Commons were, however, not to be deterred from their purpose by arguments of this nature. A second time they sent up their bill: but the Queen now thought it advisable to interpose. On the 24th of April the Parliament was prorogued.*

A few weeks before Marlborough had taken his departure for the Continent. His fame and popularity were now at their zenith. The thanks of his compeers had been communicated to him by Cowper when he resumed his seat in their assembly. A deputation from the Commons had intimated the gratitude and applause of their body. There was a strong desire on the part of his admirers to bestow upon him some further recompense for his services, and a method of gratifying him was not

* Defoe's History of the Union; Boyer; Burnet; Lettres Historiques.

far to seek. The untimely death of his only son had deprived him of the hope of transmitting, by the direct course of law, to his children the illustrious name and title he had so nobly earned. It was determined, therefore, to alter the law in this instance by an Act securing the name, the dukedom, the manor of Woodstock, and the house of Blenheim, to the posterity of his daughters; and the Commons, in their enthusiasm, settled upon the hero and his descendants an annual pension of five thousand pounds.* The 19th of December was devoted to one of those animating shows which Governments exhibit when it is considered desirable to foster the martial spirit of the people. A hundred standards and colours, the trophies of the glory of England and the humiliation of France, were borne along the Strand and up Fleet Street, to be deposited in Guildhall. The acclamations of the populace reached their loudest strain when the conqueror himself appeared in one of the royal coaches, followed by the carriages of all the people of note in the metropolis.†

Yet many causes were combining to distress Marlborough, even at a time when the people were applauding him to the skies, and the Parliament was gratifying at once his paternal feelings and his love of money. With the Whigs he and Godolphin had now concluded a species of compact, and the two friends might flatter themselves with the hope that the finest intellects and the most influential members of Parliament would cordially support them. But a mind so sagacious and dispassionate as Marlborough's could not possibly deceive itself as to the immense price which had been given for the support of the dominant faction. Was it likely that the heart of Mrs. Morley was towards Mr. and Mrs. Freeman and Mr. Montgomery as it once was when she had thought her friends staunch Tories, and firm pillars of the Church? All arguments to prove that her affairs could not be carried on without great concessions were made to the Whigs had been thrown away upon her dull Stuart understanding. She could not see the necessity of the thing. She could regard the matter in no other light than that her old friends had undergone a woeful

* 6 Anne, c. 7.

† Boyer. There was another thanksgiving day on the 31st December, when the Queen repaired to St. Paul's, and heard a sermon from Burnet.

transformation; that they had fallen into evil ways of thinking, and were endeavouring to drag her down into the same abyss with themselves. The worst was that Mrs. Freeman, instead of trying to close the breach, found her chief pleasure in widening it. A little tenderness upon her part, an abstinence from subjects of conversation which she knew to be displeasing, might easily have recovered a heart which could not as yet have strayed far from the early home of its affections. Marlborough expostulated, reasoned, implored. But advice was as utterly thrown away upon this haughty and obstinate woman as upon the Queen. Sometimes she would retire for long periods into the country, to brood over her Majesty's stupidity and perverseness. The fit would then seize her to return to Court, to bounce into Anne's private apartment, and to vent her feelings by roundly scolding her mistress.* It would have been strange indeed if conduct of this kind could have been persisted in for long without converting the Queen's affection for her favourite into positive terror.

And it was not alone the too evident change in Mrs. Morley's feelings which was causing disquietude to the hero. There were grave reasons to apprehend that the Grand Alliance against France would be soon torn asunder by the contentions of its members. In 1702 the Dutch, in their terror of the arms of the French king, had been sufficiently modest in their demands. All they then aspired to was permission to garrison a few fortified towns in the Netherlands to serve them as a barrier against the ambition of their restless neighbour. But the extraordinary successes of five campaigns had turned the heads of the States-general. They had now set their hearts upon retaining out of the conquered provinces such a proportion of towns, cities, and circumjacent territory as would virtually reduce the Netherlands to be a mere appanage of the Dutch Republic. Marlborough knew that it would be impossible to afford any countenance to such hopes without exciting at once the commercial jealousies of his own countrymen, and a cry from the Austrian princes that the crown of Spain was being robbed of its fairest jewels. The States-general, however, seemed determined to carry their point. During the year a swarm of deputies and burgomasters had taken wing from

* Conduct of the Duchess; several letters in Coxe's Memoirs.

Holland, had settled upon every town which had been evacuated by or wrested from the French, and were now playing the master in a fashion which gave violent umbrage to the people, and naturally drew from the Emperor and the titular King of Spain strong remonstrances against such interference with their rights. It was not easy to devise any plan for controlling this greediness within due bounds. If the least suspicion entered the minds of the Dutch that they would not be permitted to have things entirely their own way, some obstacle was sure to be thrown in the way of Marlborough's designs for the campaign. In their present disposition it was even greatly to be feared that they would conclude a compact with the French king, would withdraw from the Alliance, and leave the Queen and the Emperor to finish the war by themselves.

Of that disposition Louis was informed, and it appeared to him to afford just such an opening in the clouds as he had been long desiring. Since the day when the terrible news of the battle of Hochstadt had reached Versailles his mind had undergone a great change. He was no longer the self-willed despot whose fiat was to be the law to Europe, but an old man, still replete indeed with the consciousness of being a great monarch, but tremblingly anxious to escape the vengeance of those enemies his former lawlessness had aroused. It has been doubted whether he was ever acquainted with some of the worst facts about the misery of his people, the privations to which his soldiers were subjected, or the extreme demoralisation which had crept upon his armies through the difficulty of sustaining them in the field. It has been asserted that Madame de Maintenon often interposed between him and the messengers of evil tidings, and provided with affectionate care that nothing should be told which might distress him needlessly. But at any rate he knew enough to make him long for peace. He was so far humbled as to be not unwilling to give up Spain, provided his dignity could be saved in some measure by the Allies consenting that his grandson should retain a portion of the Spanish dominions with the title of king. Philip might, for instance, be allowed to retain the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily. Such being his views, to which of the confederate Powers would it be wisest to address himself first? It was with justice that he regarded the Emperor as the most envenomed

and uncompromising member of the whole Alliance. For what had the career of the French kings been for nearly a century, but one long outrage upon the feeble and declining House of Austria? And now that times had changed, that his Imperial Majesty was buoyed up by the consciousness of having powerful friends to support him, that he thought France to be sinking, was he likely to be contented with only a partial reparation of his wrongs? Would he not press his revenge to the uttermost? With regard to an application to England, there were obstacles which the King did not see his way to surmount. His notions as to the composition of English government and society were as incorrect as those of most Frenchmen of the present day. The power of the Parliament, the importance of the Whig party on one day and of the Tory party on another, the necessity felt by both sovereign and Parliament of conforming to the wishes of the nation, were matters which he never could understand. He might well think that of all the Powers banded against him England, although the most active champion, had least to contend for, that her grievances were to a great extent imaginary, and that it could not be altogether satisfactory to a commercial people like the English to spend their money in wars where there was nothing to gain. But of what signification, he seems to have thought, could be the murmurs of a people while there was a Queen on the throne? That Anne was personally embittered against him he could have had no reason for believing. But she was notoriously in the hands of a favourite, and Louis understood human nature well enough to doubt that a general in the enjoyment of prosperity, power, fame, and enormous salaries, was the person most likely to promote the interests of peace.* The Dutch, however, he thought with good reason, would not be disinclined to listen to his overtures. To drag down a prince of the House of Bourbon merely for the sake of setting up a prince of the House of Austria, could not be an object which they had much at heart in this war. It could matter little to them who reigned in Spain or Naples, provided they were delivered from all fear on the side of France, and saw a fair prospect of pursuing their commercial occupations without

* Mémoires de Torcy.

molestation. Accordingly, a few weeks after the battle of Ramilies, Louis authorised Count Bergueich to open a negotiation with the Dutch Government, and the proposals which this gentleman made through one of the provincial governors were at once communicated to Heinsius. Louis, without troubling himself about what his grandson or his grandson's subjects might think of the compact, professed himself willing to relinquish Spain and its American dependencies, to give the Dutch an ample barrier, to recognise the title of Anne, and to make a treaty which would ensure great commercial advantages to the two maritime Powers. On the other hand, he stipulated that Philip should remain sovereign of Naples, Sicily, and Milan.* Heinsius loyally gave notice of these tempting offers to Marlborough, and a correspondence ensued between the Dutch and English Governments. No politician could indeed fail to see, that if Philip retained these places, there was the same danger of Italy becoming a French province as there was now of Spain. There could not be a doubt, moreover, that the Emperor would not listen to such a compromise; for it was notorious that the Italian dependencies were the very portion of the Spanish Empire upon which he set most value. But Englishmen and Dutchmen might well reflect whether, if they could conclude a peace which would secure to them all they could reasonably expect, it was worth while to go on fighting merely to satisfy the covetousness of the Austrian princes. One brother reigning in Germany and another in Spain would surely constitute such an equipoise to the power of the French king as ought to ensure the future tranquillity of Europe. The proposals, in fact, excited a profound sensation in Holland. From the first there had been a minority in the Republic averse to the war; and the numbers of this party had strengthened as the war proceeded, and the helplessness of the Emperor and the domineering spirit of the English Government had become more manifest. Was business, it was asked, to be interrupted, and money squandered at a rate which would soon entail ruin upon the whole country, merely for the sake of wresting from France kingdoms and provinces in which the Republic was to have no share? It was plain that these

* Lamberty.

Austrian princes would never consent that the Republic should retain, as a security against France, a single one of those towns her soldiers had borne the principal share in conquering. It was plain also that England, out of that jealousy she had always evinced for her rival upon the seas, would side with the Austrian princes, and use her influence that the Republic should derive as little advantage as possible from the war.*

While such were the sentiments of a large and growing party in the State, the proposals of Louis were received, and at once became the subject of general conversation. Marlborough was in consternation at the opinions he heard expressed on all sides. "It is publicly said at the Hague," he reported, "that France is reduced to what she ought to be, and that to carry the war further would only serve to make England greater than is desirable."† His own thoughts as to what would be fair terms of peace are contained in a letter written to Heinsius immediately after the proposals had been communicated to him. "As a good Englishman," he observed, "I must be of the opinion of my countrymen that both by treaty and interest we are obliged to preserve the monarchy of Spain entire. At the same time, as a friend, I must acknowledge my belief that France can hardly be brought to a peace unless something be given to the Duke of Anjou to preserve to him the title of king."‡ But the difficulty was to prescribe what that "something" should be. There was not a part of the Spanish Empire which could be assigned to Philip without giving umbrage to one ally or another, unless it were the American dependencies. The English Whigs, reflecting the mercantile interest of their country, were determined he should not have Spain. To transfer his throne to any part of Italy would be unfair to the Duke of Savoy, who would then find himself between the hammer and the anvil. All the arguments, moreover, which convinced the English that Philip's retaining possession of Spain was prejudicial to their interests applied in an equal degree to his retaining possession of the Italian kingdoms. If Louis and his grandson acted in concert, the Mediterranean would become a

* Several letters of Marlborough to Godolphin during the summer and autumn of 1706.

† Marlborough to Godolphin, August 30, September 10.

‡ Marlborough to Heinsius, August 21, September 1.

French lake, and the English might find themselves excluded from the most lucrative markets then known to them. That the Netherlands should be the portion of the Spanish Empire allotted to him was of course out of the question. The Dutch would regard their fate as settled if the borders of France were advanced to their own.

That this country, however, was bound by treaty to preserve the Spanish monarchy entire was clearly an erroneous opinion. In point of fact England, under the partition treaty, stood pledged to divide it. The articles of alliance between the Emperor, the States-general, and the King of England contained no mention of the partition treaty: but neither was there any compact that the Allies would insist upon the entire restitution of the Spanish dominions by the French king. The objects of the war were specified to be the obtaining of a just and reasonable satisfaction for the Emperor and the English king, a particular security for the dominions and commerce of the States-general, and a sufficient provision that the kingdoms of France and Spain should be never united or come under the government of the same person. What was to constitute a just and reasonable satisfaction for the Emperor, in what the security to the States-general was to consist, what should be deemed a sufficient provision against the union of France and Spain, and who was to be the arbitrator in case of disputes, were all matters for future adjustment. So loosely drawn indeed were the terms of alliance as to present the greatest possible chance that if the contracting parties were successful, they would be compelled to go to war between themselves to determine their shares of the spoil.

In truth, the difficulties in the way of concluding a thoroughly satisfactory peace were now beginning to be realised. The success of the war so far must have surpassed the most sanguine expectations which the Allies could have formed when they commenced it. The brains of Dutch, German, English statesmen were all turned by such a succession of victories. Every politician was parcelling out the Spanish dominions in the manner that pleased most his sense of equity, or his notions of what would be to the advantage of his country. But there was one man who remained calm amid the general madness,

and that was the very man who had contributed most to bring about this state of things. Marlborough was one of the few persons who retained a proper respect for the power of the French king and nation, stricken as they might now appear to be. It was in this frame of mind that he expressed his doubt to Heinsius whether Louis could be brought to accept of conditions which left his grandson nothing. Further reflection, however, seems to have convinced him of the impossibility of effecting any compromise. The Emperor on the one side, the Whigs on the other, would hear of none. There was no resource, therefore, but to go on with the war until the whole Spanish monarchy had been recovered from France.

Count Bergueich had not been the only person whom Louis had employed to mediate with his adversaries. Before the forces quitted the field the Elector of Bavaria had written to Marlborough proposing that a conference should be held somewhere between the two armies. The proposal was submitted to the Governments of Holland and England. But by this time Marlborough had fully made up his mind. All his immense influence was brought to bear upon the Dutch statesmen. A chilling reply was returned to the Elector.* The Queen, it stated, was ready, in conjunction with her Allies, to enter into negotiations for peace: but without more particular declarations from the most Christian King, it would be useless to accept the proposal of his Highness. The States-general, it was added, were of the same opinion as her Majesty. It was also intimated to Bergueich that no overtures for peace made on the part of the King of France would be taken into consideration, unless the unconditional restitution of the entire dominions of Charles II. was offered as the basis of a treaty. Convinced by these failures that success had made the Allies utterly unreasonable, and that peace was not to be had except upon terms intolerably humiliating, the wearied and careworn old monarch once more sat down with his minister, Chamillart, to calculate his resources and readjust his armies.

Italy, it was clear, had been irretrievably lost by the rout of the Duke of Orleans before Turin. To prolong the war in that quarter would be useless and ruinous. But it was conceived

* It is given in Lamberty.

that the troops which had been hitherto maintained in Italy might be thrown with decisive effect upon the well-balanced contest in Spain. A considerable force still held its ground in Piedmont under the command of the Prince of Vaudemont and a skilful officer named Medavi. This force, so far from sharing in the disaster of the main army, had been victorious, only two days after the battle of Turin, against an Imperial detachment which had been sent against it. The position of the Prince and Medavi had now, however, become one of great danger. The complete overthrow of the Duke had been followed by the surrender of every French garrison in Piedmont, and this remnant of the King's forces was now isolated in the midst of a hostile country. Medavi boldly assured his master that, untoward as appearances might seem, he could still maintain his ground in the Milanese. But Louis, convinced that all was over in this quarter, and intent upon new schemes, sent him instructions to treat for permission to retire from Italy. That permission he assuredly would not have obtained; and this fine body of men might have been cooped up where it could have been of no service to France, or might even have been compelled to surrender at discretion, but for the folly, greediness, and treachery of the Imperial statesmen. Joseph, to his immeasurable delight, now found himself in a condition to become master of Italy, that rich and beautiful prize for which the House of Austria had longed for so many generations in vain. If there were to be any partition of the Spanish Empire as the result of this war, now, he felt, was the time to secure his portion. Italy was, to use his own expression, the orange which he intended to reserve for himself, and which no one should squeeze with him. It was his determination to send the greater part of his forces to take possession of the kingdom of Naples: but this plan he could not safely put in execution so long as a French force remained to employ his troops in the north. He was impatient, therefore, to get rid of his enemies by any means, and under these circumstances Medavi found no difficulty in arranging a convention which left him at liberty to retire unmolested to Susa.*

The news of this convention excited no small feelings of

* Lamberty; Lettres Historiques.

vexation and disgust in the minds of English and Dutch statesmen.* That particular member of the Alliance, for whose relief and preservation oceans of blood and mountains of treasure had been expended, and in support of whose pretensions it had been decided that the war must be continued at any cost, had, it seemed, no scruples about deserting the common cause whenever an opportunity presented itself of serving his own interests. In truth, nothing could be more mortifying than the determination of his Imperial Majesty to send his troops to Naples at this conjuncture. During the autumn, Marlborough and Heinsius had been concerting a scheme for employing the victorious armies of Eugene and the Duke of Savoy. They were to march into Provence, and lay siege to Toulon. The dockyards of that port had been, ever since the almost total destruction of the navy at Vigo, the scene of exertions so energetic, that the French flag was again beginning to be formidable in the waters of the Mediterranean. A number of ships, mounting between fifty and ninety guns each, had been already sent to sea, and many more lay, partially finished, on the stocks. There could be no question but that the burning of these dockyards and their contents would cut short all the hopes Louis entertained of resuscitating his maritime power. The action, moreover, would set at rest the minds of all English and Dutch merchants trading to the Levant for many years to come. But this fair scheme, it now appeared, must be abandoned. It was in vain that the Earl of Manchester, who was then proceeding on an embassy to Venice, turned aside to Vienna, and endeavoured to dissuade the Emperor from sending his troops southward. Joseph was not to be diverted from a design where he saw his interest clearly, to execute another which seemed to him to be framed especially for the advantage of his allies. He therefore laid his orders upon Eugene; and in the middle of May, Count Thaun, with twelve thousand men, commenced his march towards Naples. About the same time, the soldiers of Medavi's division, after traversing Piedmont like a pack of wolves, came pouring over the pass of Mount Cenis to augment the army which Louis, who had received warning of the inten-

* Godolphin to Marlborough, May 17—28; Marlborough to Godolphin, June 1—12.

tions of his northern foes with regard to Toulon, had taken the precaution to station in Dauphiné.*

In Flanders and upon the Rhine the French king determined to continue his armies upon much the same footing as in the previous year, and that Vendôme and Villars should retain their respective commands. To Spain, however, he resolved to send every man he could spare from the defence of his own kingdom. His nephew, the Duke of Orleans, who was panting for an opportunity to retrieve his disgrace in Italy, was honoured with a commission which placed him above Berwick in the command of the forces of the two crowns in the Peninsula. The Duke instantly set out; but his progress was impeded by the honours paid him. Philip had sent orders all along the northern road that his uncle should be treated in all respects as an Infante of Spain, and his arrival at every town became, in consequence, the signal for festivities which could not well be declined. Three days only he spent with the royal family in Madrid; but his stay, brief as it was, he was soon distressed to learn had been one day too long. Upon the 26th of April he reached Berwick's head-quarters at Almanza, and found the army exulting in a splendid victory which had been won the day before.

The absence of any controlling authority, the petty jealousies existing between German chamberlains and English, Dutch and Portuguese officers, the neglect of officials at home, who, while diligent enough in satisfying the demands of Marlborough, were content that matters should take their course in Spain, had at length produced a terrible disaster to the cause of the Alliance. The year 1706 had closed upon the troops of Galway and Das Minas as they lay distributed between a few walled towns among the mountains at the southern extremity of Valencia. The army with which Berwick had chased them from Castile lay not far off, being cantoned just across the border in Murcia. In December, Peterborough returned from Italy. During the short time of his absence, he had not only succeeded in raising a sum of money at Genoa, but had held several discussions with the Duke of Savoy and with Eugene. He left them in the full conviction that the project on Toulon

* Lettres Historiques.

would be put in execution early in the spring. Shortly after his arrival, a council of war was held by the Allied officers to determine upon the course which should be pursued. Galway and Stanhope were both of opinion that, having regard to the circumstances that the country in their neighbourhood was too much exhausted to afford them sustenance much longer, and that large reinforcements were reported to be on their way to Berwick, the best thing to be done was to make an immediate attempt to regain possession of Madrid. Most of the officers coincided with this judgment. Peterborough took an entirely different view. Their most prudent course, he said, would be to rest satisfied with defending the provinces already conquered while the Imperial and Piedmontese troops were executing their attack on Toulon. Should that business be successful, it would be easy for the conquerors to strike a mortal blow at Spain through France. But to advance in the meantime into the open plains of Castile, in the face of an enemy which was known to be superior in cavalry, was to expose the army to needless risks; and a single defeat would most likely entail the loss of every foot of ground the Allies possessed in the Peninsula.*

It might be supposed that when a man, whose schemes were usually characterised by so much daring as to seem chimerical until he had executed them, recommended caution, his admonitions would have made great impression. Peterborough's warning was, however, ineffectual against the general cry for action; and soon afterwards, a letter of recall having reached him, he took his final departure from a country in which his genius and his foibles had rendered his name immortal. His most extraordinary characteristic was his restless activity. His meagre body was in constant motion. His ardent soul was in a perpetual ferment. Of morals or religious principles he seems to have had hardly any conception. Man had no time for indulging in such abstruse speculations in this bustling world. If his thoughts were not for the moment engrossed by some scheme for capturing a city or subduing a kingdom by a *coup-de-main*, he was sure to be meditating

* Conduct of Peterborough; Galway's narrative and Peterborough's answers; Lamberty gives several letters of Peterborough on this subject.

some equally dangerous affair of gallantry. To steal a nun out of a convent at the risk of exciting a general rising of the townspeople, to carry off a lady in spite of the swords of her husband and brothers, were enterprises thoroughly congenial to him. His conversation, his epistolary style, the dispatches with which he overwhelmed the Ministers, were as sparkling as his actions, gay, spirited, and replete with epigrams. A little less mercury and a little more solid metal in his composition would have constituted him the greatest instead of the most eccentric man of his age. But his genius was lost to his country because, like the electric light, it could not be tamed into obedience and usefulness. That such a man could act in harmony with the dull, pompous creatures about Charles, or even with the conscientious, experienced, but not very brilliant Galway, was from the first an impossibility.

About a month before Peterborough's departure Shovel's squadron reached Alicante with a reinforcement of troops under the command of Lord Rivers. The regiments now set on shore were those which had been destined for the expedition to the Garonne in the previous year, and, having been cooped up in transports for six months, were in no good condition. Indeed, a force which had originally consisted of ten thousand men had, in that space of time, dwindled to but seven thousand effective soldiers. Of this number, however, four thousand five hundred were English. The plan of the Allied officers was to direct the march to Madrid through Aragon, in order to avoid the difficulty of crossing the Tagus, a deep and rapid stream, flowing for a long distance between high and precipitous banks. Commissaries were accordingly despatched to make arrangements along the intended roads; and April had arrived before all the preparations were complete. It was then judged advisable to commence operations by wasting the country and destroying the magazines which Berwick had established near the frontier of Valencia, so as to render an invasion of that province less practicable. But now a fresh obstacle arose to vex the unhappy men who were labouring to conquer the kingdom for Charles. On the very eve of marching his Majesty announced his intention of setting off to provide for the defence of Catalonia, and of taking with him some of the regiment of

horse and foot. This freak had been suggested to him by the Count de Noyelles, the favourite of the day, between whom and the whole body of Portuguese and English officers there was a feud of old standing. The Count, ambitious and opinionated, had long pined for the distinction of being in a separate command. Convinced at length that there would be no scope for his abilities by the side of Galway, Stanhope, and Das Minas, he prevailed upon his master to withdraw from them, and to betake himself to a considerable force of German and Spanish horse, of Dutch and Spanish foot, and of English marines, which it was still thought necessary to keep up in Catalonia. The Allied officers did their best to dissuade the King from his insane project of weakening the army. Stanhope, out of all patience with the absurdity of the thing, remonstrated with a freedom that made his Majesty conclude that, next to Peterborough, this Englishman was the most ill-bred and disrespectful of persons. But nothing could be obtained from Charles except a half promise to rejoin the army with the Catalonian troops when it reached Aragon.*

The army, reduced by the withdrawal of several important regiments, now numbered no more than eleven thousand foot, and four thousand five hundred horse. But the increasing difficulties of obtaining food compelled Galway to take the field. He commenced the campaign with the capture of Yecla, a small town in which had been amassed a welcome store of provisions. Villena, a more important place, presided over by a grand castle, was next attempted; but the governor, a Frenchman, refused to surrender, and Galway could ill afford to consume time by a siege. He heard that Berwick's army was assembled near Chinchilla, about forty miles away: he called a council of war, and his officers unanimously declared that to seek out and defeat the Marshal was the only means of extricating the army from its difficulties. The Allies resumed their march, and on the 25th of April came in sight of the French and Spanish force, which lay encamped in the open plain a short distance from the town of Almanza. Each side at once made its dispositions for a battle. Galway seems to have been

* Lord Mahon's History of the War; the Debates in Parliament, 1711; Burnet; Boyer.

under the impression that his adversary, although superior in cavalry, had less infantry than himself; but the intelligence which had led him to form this impression had been lamentably incorrect. Berwick had, in truth, been joined a considerable time before by nearly seven thousand French, and was not only much stronger in cavalry, but more than a match for the Allies as to his infantry. He drew up his forces, after the usual practice of French commanders, in two lines, and calmly awaited the attack.

The dispositions of the Allied officers were dictated rather by punctilious claims for precedence than by any considerations of what would be advantageous for the common cause. The Portuguese had, upon entering Spain, stipulated that they should always be allowed the post of honour. Das Minas now asserted his claim, and proceeded to draw up upon the right wing his own miserably inefficient cavalry. The Portuguese foot occupied part of the centre; and on the left came the only dependible part of the army, the English and Dutch regiments. Galway himself commenced the battle by leading the English dragoons to the attack of a battery. They were soon hurled back in utter disorder by the French horse, who were in overwhelming numbers. But the infantry stationed near them advanced, and poured in a fire so deadly as to check the further advance of the pursuers.

The entire centre of foot now moved forward under the command of Das Minas. Before the steady march of the English and Dutch everything gave way. The first, the second line of the enemy was penetrated, the soldiers dealing out a rapid fire to right and left. For a short time, indeed, it seemed as if the admirable coolness and discipline of these troops would carry the day against all odds.

But while the infantry were thus successful, the cavalry were fast losing the battle. Galway had succeeded in re-forming his dragoons. Hardly had he done so when the French were upon them again, and with the same signal success as before. Again, however, the victors had to retreat before the tremendous fire of the regiments on foot. Galway himself was struck down with a sabre-cut in his forehead, and was forced to retire to get his wound dressed.

In a brief space he was in the saddle again; but by this time the day was irretrievably lost. The Portuguese cavalry on the right, true to their reputation, had fled after sustaining a few charges; and in the confusion, their comrades on foot, mistaking them for the enemy, had saluted them with a volley, which quickened their departure from the field. The infantry still held their ground, although now entirely surrounded by the hostile cavalry, until Berwick, finding that no impression could be made upon their firm and compact ranks, brought up his own infantry, and ordered a charge with the bayonet. Then the whole body broke up into fragments, and the plain was covered with fugitives vainly endeavouring to escape from the French troopers. The Allied officers by great exertions succeeded in keeping together about five thousand men, who marched off, maintaining a resolute front, to the shelter afforded by some tree-covered hills. There they passed an uneasy night, and the returning day brought with it but little comfort. Of water and provisions they were entirely destitute: their ammunition was nearly expended; and the masses of French infantry had closed every avenue for retreat. In these desperate circumstances no alternative remained but to lay down their arms and surrender at the discretion of the conquerors. Galway and Das Minas had been more fortunate. Collecting what horse they could, they rode hard for the friendly province of Valencia, distributed a few men in passing among the towns to check the pursuit of the enemy, and then hastened on to Catalonia, the only part of the conquests in Spain which there seemed a chance of preserving. They had lost three-fourths of their army, all their artillery, and the greater portion of their baggage.*

The intelligence of the battle of Almanza reached the various Courts of Europe just at the time when the armies in the Netherlands and on the Rhine were assembled, and on the point of renewing the contest. Louis joyfully ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung in Nôtre Dame. The spirits of the Whigs, who had regarded the conquest of Spain as a work requiring only some time and patience for its execution, were greatly cast down. No letter, in truth, could have been more melancholy in its

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer; Burnet; Mémoires de Berwick; St. Simon.

tone than the one in which Galway announced his defeat. The affairs in Spain he looked upon as irretrievably lost. All the generals, he said, were of opinion that it was impossible to continue in the kingdom.* Marlborough took a somewhat less despairing view of the disaster. He perceived indeed the necessity of despatching reinforcements to Catalonia, and at once communicated with the authorities at the Hague and Vienna, in the hope that one party or the other would be inclined to furnish the requisite assistance. The answers which he received to his applications exhibit, in a striking light, the nature of the ties existing between the component members of the Alliance. The Dutch statesmen listened to Galway's doleful news with mortifying equanimity. Some command of feature was indeed necessary to conceal the joy they really felt. The common people, less tutored to disguise their sentiments, openly expressed their delight.†

Nor was it strange that such should have been their feelings. They had originally sent their battalions to Spain, and had since continued to maintain them there, for no other purpose than to gratify their English allies. How the war turned out in this quarter was nothing to them. It was their concern to conquer and retain as many towns in the Netherlands as possible. The abandonment of the cause in Spain, therefore, would simply relieve them of an useless expense. The Emperor's reply showed equal solicitude for his own interest and indifference to everything which concerned him in a minor degree. The untoward position of things in Spain only confirmed his Majesty in his opinion of the advisability of pushing on the conquest of the Italian kingdoms. A little later—and this was all the hope he could hold out—he might be able to spare a few regiments for service in Spain, if the maritime Powers were willing to pay and feed them.‡ It was evident, therefore, that if the war was to be continued in the Peninsula, the whole burden must fall on England. What view the Parliament might take of this subject was a matter of speculation: but until its meeting there could be no help but that King

* Galway to Sunderland, April 27, May 8.
† Marlborough to Harley.
‡ Marlborough to Godolphin, May 15—26; Zinzendorf to Marlborough, May 21.

Charles and his unhappy generals would have to shift for themselves.

Meanwhile Louis, overwhelmed with financial difficulties, and longing to be at rest, had left no stone unturned in his endeavours to obtain peace. For some time past his attention had been directed to the north-east, and he had conceived some hopes of finding sympathy and support in this quarter. Charles XII. of Sweden, after pulling down one King of Poland, and setting up another, had now established himself in Saxony, and seemed to be meditating new enterprises. This warlike savage was at the head of forty thousand men, and speculations as to the part of Europe which would first be made to feel his power rendered many a crowned head uneasy. There were strong indications that he was revolving an invasion of the Empire: for Charles, who conceived himself born to rectify all the wrongs which the Protestants had suffered since the death of Gustavus, had a long list of grievances against his Cæsarian Majesty. Louis, in hope of securing so mighty a coadjutor, despatched a French gentleman to Alt Ranstadt, where the King was holding his semi-barbarous court. It was a part of this person's instructions to request the intervention of Charles in the war which was raging in the west. The Christian king, he was to intimate, was exceedingly desirous of effecting a peace, but his proposals were constantly rejected by his opponents, who had been rendered unreasonable by their successes. If his Swedish Majesty would condescend to use his good offices, it was impossible but that the Allies would listen with respect to so great and powerful a mediator. Proposals of this kind were well calculated to work upon the vanity of Charles, and to inspire in him a partiality for the crowned suppliant. Louis was, moreover, too wise to neglect other means for securing the friendship he coveted. His agent was instructed to offer three hundred thousand livres to Count Piper, the King's principal confidant, and humbler bribes to the subordinate Ministers.*

It was speedily known throughout Europe that the French king was intriguing at the court of Charles, and the Continent

* Coxe's Memoirs. The French envoy to Charles was the Sieur de Ricoux; Burnet.

was filled with disquieting rumours. Intelligence of what was passing, and even a copy of the Frenchman's instructions, were not long, however, in reaching Marlborough through the agency of a Prussian officer named Grumbkow, who had served several campaigns with the Allied army. Grumbkow had been despatched by his sovereign to Alt Ranstadt, and had met with a reception from Charles and his Ministers far more cordial than that which had been accorded to the French envoy. His Majesty had indeed honoured him with a long conversation, and the Prussian had left with a strong conviction that the Allied sovereigns need be under no apprehensions from his designs; that it was the Czar and not the Emperor whom he was preparing to attack. He had, Grumbkow further reported, shown great desire for information about his Grace, had asked whether it was his custom to charge with his soldiers in person, and had been so much delighted with the account of his narrow escape on the field of Ramilies, as to call for a repetition of the story. The diplomatic Prussian went on to inform his Majesty that his Grace entertained the highest esteem and admiration for him, and was ardently desirous of paying his respects. "That is not likely to happen," replied Charles, "but I should be delighted to see a general of whom I have heard so much." With the Swedish Ministers, who imitated the rude manners of their master, and lived in the style of roving Tartars, Grumbkow also had interviews, and finally returned to Berlin with many doleful tales about his dinners, but with a satisfactory budget of information about the disposition and designs of the hero who was keeping all Europe in suspense.*

The report of an ordinary diplomatist was, however, unavailing to eradicate the deep-rooted uneasiness which the Swede had inspired. Marlborough was pressed to pay him a visit in person. His Majesty, it was urged, would be more likely to open himself frankly to him than to any one else. The contents of some intercepted letters which fell into Dutch hands at this time, at length convinced the Duke that it would be prudent, before commencing the campaign, to have some conversation with the King. Every one of the Swedish Ministers, except

* Grumbkow to Marlborough, January 11.

Piper, it seemed, was in the pay of France. He decided, therefore, to make a rapid journey to Saxony.

The interview which followed between the Englishman, who owed his military triumphs principally to his being the most cool and collected of human beings, and the half-mad Swede, who first confused his enemies by the extraordinary character of his manœuvres, and then overwhelmed them with the fury of his attack, passed off satisfactorily. Marlborough, who had well studied his part, addressed his Majesty in a strain of compliment so fulsome that it would have been thought insulting by most civilised sovereigns. Charles was, however, accustomed to flattery, responded with the utmost friendliness, and assured his visitor of the high regard he entertained for the Queen and for the interests of the Alliance. He invited Marlborough to dine with him, and paid him an unusual mark of consideration by continuing to sit at table for three-quarters of an hour, the period in which his Majesty and his less favoured guests despatched the meal having never before been known to exceed fifteen minutes. A long conversation upon the affairs of Europe succeeded, in the course of which Marlborough contrived to extract from Charles an assurance that he would accept no proposal to act as a mediator without first consulting the Queen of England. Upon one subject the fiery nature of the Swede broke out in a manner which would have involved in a difficulty a less skilful diplomatist than the Duke. Charles was, after his fashion, a devout Protestant, and held the mischievous doctrine that it is the first and most sacred duty of a prince to extend his protection to the members of his own sect, under whatever political government they might happen to live. If anything could have diverted him from his projects against Russia, it would have been his inclination to fight over again the battles which Gustavus had fought on behalf of the Protestants of the Empire. As it was, he was more than half tempted to turn his arms southward, in order to regain for them the privileges of which they had been deprived since the treaty of Westphalia. Marlborough, with whom it was a main point to keep the peace between him and the Emperor, succeeded in calming the indignation which the wrongs of the Protestants excited in his mind, by making a sort of half promise that, when the war should be

at an end, the Queen would do her best to bring the Imperial Government to reason upon this point. The fervid mind of the Swede was at once fired with a new project. Why should there not be a Protestant league, of which the Queen of England and himself should be the chiefs, and the object of which should be the protection and advancement of the Protestant interests in all parts of Europe? Marlborough received and parried this romantic proposal with his accustomed dexterity, and the parties separated on the best of terms with each other. Before leaving Alt Ranstadt, however, the Duke thought it wise to buy over three of his Majesty's Ministers, who were none the less fond of money for the simplicity of their diet and apparel, with the promise of paying them each a pension of one thousand pounds a year.*

Foiled in his hopes of finding an ally, or at least a mediator, in Charles, Louis now turned, in his restless search after peace, to a very different quarter. In February he wrote to the Pope to request the assistance of his Holiness in adjusting the differences between himself and the Austrian princes. The offers he stated his readiness to make to the Emperor and the Archduke were the converse of those by which he had attempted to conciliate Holland and England. He had, he declared, his grandson's authority to make the condition that, if Philip were permitted to retain unmolested the kingdom of Spain and its dependencies in America and the Netherlands, he would resign all pretensions to the Italian possessions in favour of Charles. Had this proposal been made before the battle of Turin, it is not unlikely that the Emperor would have succumbed to the temptation. As it was, the English Ministers were in such a state of trepidation lest it should be accepted, as to send instructions to their agent in Vienna to strive by every kind of remonstrance to keep the Imperial Court steady to the Alliance. But the interference was superfluous. Joseph considered the Italian kingdoms as being already secured, and was therefore

* Various letters in Coxe and Lamberty; Lettres Historiques; Burnet. Are we to attribute the following, which occurs in Lamberty, to the art of Marlborough or the artifice of Piper?—"Le Comte Piper, qui était auprès du Roi avec le secrétaire d'état Harmelin, ne put s'abstenir de répandre quelques larmes aux expressions pathétiques dont le Duc se servait pour assurer le roi de Suède de l'amitié de sa Majesté Britannique."

disposed to wait until his allies had conquered for him the remaining portions of the Spanish Empire. Again, therefore, Louis had the mortification of being repelled in his endeavours to procure peace; but as if anxious to show the world that the continuance of the war was no fault of his, he caused his letter to the Pope to be published in the *Mercure Galant*.

CHAPTER XV.

THE first intelligence received by Marlborough upon his return to the Hague was that of Galway's defeat at Almanza, entailing the almost entire ruin of the Allied cause in Spain. A few days afterwards came news of another disaster which the energetic and ingenious Villars had inflicted upon the army which guarded the passage of the Rhine.

The campaigning season had come upon the Germans, as usual, before they were prepared. Each circle of the Empire was bound to furnish annually a certain contingent of men towards the common defence of the country; but it seems that the various burgomasters and councils preferred in their apathy to trust their homes, their property, and their families to the hands of God rather than to spend the requisite amount of florins to render them secure. Since the preceding year a change had occurred in the command of the defending army. Prince Louis had died, and had been interred in the church of Baden Baden, where a pompous epitaph commemorative of his virtues, abilities, and triumphs still attests the affection or the effrontery of his relatives. His place had been supplied by another sovereign prince, the Margrave of Bayreuth. It might be presumed that any general who succeeded the vain and dilatory Prince Louis would be almost necessarily an improvement; yet it was soon apparent that, when compared with the Margrave, the Prince had been a wonder of activity and genius. He was an old man, of indolent habits, and almost entirely destitute of military experience. He took no steps whatever to stir up the authorities who were to supply him with soldiers, and when May came the army to which was entrusted the protection of Germany consisted of little more than eighteen thousand men. He took up his quarters within

the formidable lines of Stolhoffen, which had been constructed for the express purpose of defending the frontier of the Rhine, and constituted a long series of fortifications stretching from Phillipsburg to within a few miles of Kehl, and then trending away at right angles up to the pine-clad hills of the Black Forest. During the winter Villars made a careful survey of these lines, and laid his plans for breaking into them. By the time his army, which was at least a third part more numerous than that of the Margrave, was in a condition to take the field, he had completed his arrangements. Having thrown his opponents off their guard by some most ingenious stratagems, his troops passed the Rhine almost simultaneously at three places. Some small detachments, which the Imperial commander despatched to check the advance of the invaders, were overpowered with ease. At daybreak on the morning of the 23rd of May the French were before the lines of Stolhoffen, and found them abandoned. The Margrave, struck with panic, had beaten a retreat, leaving behind him all his cannon, and the greater part of his baggage.

This shameful desertion of the principal rampart of Germany entailed upon the country the most frightful consequences. An immense district, comprising the present duchies of Baden, Wurtemburg, and Hesse Darmstadt, with a portion of the Kingdom of Bavaria, lay open to the mercy of the invaders. The inhabitants, hitherto so careless about their security, were now so paralyzed by alarm, that not a thought of resistance entered their minds. Town after town sent deputations to negotiate terms of ransom. The sums which Villars demanded were, of course, exorbitant; but the citizens had good cause to remember the French, and were ready to promise anything to a marshal who, they knew, would not hesitate to lay in ashes any town which dared to make a show of independence. The army continued its march, without meeting a foe, to Rastadt, where Villars established himself for a short time in the luxurious palace of his late adversary, Prince Louis, and then resumed its course to Stuttgart. Detachments were sent out to every quarter to pillage or exact contributions. From the wealthy capital of Wurtemburg alone the Marshal drew upwards of two millions of livres. The Elector of Mayence

was permitted to ransom his dominions for sixty thousand florins; the Prince of Darmstadt his for a hundred thousand. No accounts were ever rendered by Villars of the money he received. Louis was content that his treasury should be relieved from the burden of supporting the army of the Rhine for a whole year. Any surplus that might remain after paying and sustaining his troops, he good-humouredly made over to the Marshal, who asked for it without scruple, and afterwards enjoyed it without remorse.*

With such misfortunes both in Spain and Germany had that year commenced which was to have witnessed the complete triumph of the Allied cause, and the mightiest monarch in Europe forced to implore peace upon any terms. And the worst was that it was not alone in these parts that affairs were going ill. Marlborough and his friends, in forming the opinion that one campaign more would complete the humiliation of the French king, had for once over-estimated the probabilities that that campaign would be a successful one. It must have been evident that, without the cordial support of the Dutch, it was idle to hope for further triumphs in the Netherlands, and the last year had furnished ample proofs that a very influential party in Holland was disinclined to pursue the war any further. Louis, in truth, had professed his willingness to meet the views of the Dutch in regard to their barrier; and why then, it was asked, should the war be protracted for the behoof of the Austrian princes; for an Emperor whose subjects were too supine to take the commonest precautions for their own safety; for the Archduke, his brother, who was too indolent to secure a crown which had actually been put within his grasp; and for a crowd of courtiers and generals who were enriching themselves out of the miseries of nations? Hitherto the war had indeed been successful beyond hope. Great pitched battles had been gained: an immense district had been conquered. If these advantages were now rightly turned to account, a very satisfactory peace might be the result. To go on fighting was simply to expose all that had been won to the risk of fortune.

* Lettres Historiques; Mémoires de Villars; Campagne d'Allemagne: St. Simon.

Marlborough was himself the first person to feel the effects of that sullen humour which had come over the States-general. The seductive suavity of his manners, his brilliant reputation, his unvarying success in the field, had never charmed the prudent Dutch into reposing more than a limited confidence in him. Indeed his method of warfare, which, in the eyes of a Condé, a Gustavus, or a Napoleon, would have certainly savoured rather of caution than temerity, appeared to most of the Dutch officers, who were warriors of the old German school, as absurdly hazardous, and successful only by dint of good fortune. The fear that he might in the approaching campaign commit some mistake, which would complete that ruin of Allied affairs which had been commenced by Galway and the Margrave of Bayreuth, tormented the States. There was, moreover, a prevalent rumour that the French army had been raised to a strength greater than that which the Allies could muster. It was deemed wise, therefore, that the too-aspiring commander should for a while be held in leading-strings. The deputies who, in the preceding year, had been requested to keep their eyes shut, were now ordered to keep them wide open, and to set themselves against all rash enterprises. Marlborough was fully aware of what was in store for him, and submitted patiently to the degradation. Remonstrance, he knew, would tend only to inflame his masters, and make matters worse. He took the field with his unwelcome companions, determined that nothing they might do should provoke him to utter one angry word, and hoping that gentle argument would at length prevail with his gaolers. His principal care was to hide his want of authority from the army, for fear lest his soldiers should brook the restraint of non-professional chiefs less patiently than himself.* It is amusing to picture to one's fancy with what rage a commander like Peterborough would have seen his opinions overborne, his motions hampered, his finest combinations frustrated, all the brilliant fruits of his invention nipped in the bud by a parcel of merchants, who could not have put a single company through its exercise. He would have filled every Court in Europe with his complaints, and the Grand Alliance would have broken up in a tempest of

* Marlborough to Godolphin, May 30, June 10.

recriminations. Marlborough was content to hope that the invasion of Provence, which it had been settled should be undertaken by Eugene and the Duke of Savoy, would at length compel Louis to direct so large a proportion of Vendôme's troops to the south, that even the Dutch would take heart, and permit him to act as he pleased.

Vendôme was, on his side, determined to risk nothing. He chose a position in the neighbourhood of Gemblours, where his splendid cavalry would have ample scope to profit by their superior numbers. Marlborough encamped not many miles off at Meldert, and expectation was rife in England that a great battle would ensue. But one commander was resolved not to attack, and the other was restrained from attacking. Early in August, at length, Vendôme was forced to part with a considerable detachment, and the Duke, having gained over the deputies, at once moved against him. But the wary Frenchman had regained another strong camp before he could be overtaken. Heavy rains then kept both armies in their respective stations for more than a fortnight. At this conjuncture Peterborough made his appearance, and the conversations which passed between the two military geniuses must have been diverting. The Earl was full of complaints, and darted from subject to subject with his usual vivacity. The Duke was all calm politeness, and refrained, except in his private letters, from intimating that he thought my Lord Peterborough both a madman and a bore.*

At length the weather cleared: Marlborough shook off his visitor, and resumed the pursuit of his enemy. A series of uninteresting manœuvres ensued. Each commander was anxious to bring the feeble and useless campaign to a close. Vendôme was in haste to return to the life of debauchery which he pursued at Anêt. Marlborough wished to make arrangements for a more vigorous prosecution of the war. Accordingly in the middle of October both armies retired into winter quarters.

Six weeks before the campaign was brought to a close information was received that the expedition against Toulon

* Marlborough to the Duchess, August 15—26; August 25, September 5. He cautions his wife about Peterborough in these terms: "If Lord Peterborough should, when he comes to England, at any time write to you, pray be careful what answer you make, for sooner or later it will be in print."

had undergone that fate which usually attends schemes planned by parties insufficiently acquainted with the difficulties that lie in the way of their execution. Godolphin, Marlborough, and Heinsius had between them concerted this expedition in the conviction that if it were successful France could hardly pretend to continue the war another year. If Toulon were captured, not only might the Allies destroy the largest fleet Louis still possessed, but also the dockyards which would enable him to construct a new one. There were other advantages, moreover, to recommend the scheme. An invasion of the south of France would have the effect of checking the flow of soldiers towards Spain, even although the grand object of that invasion should prove too difficult to accomplish; and if Toulon fell it would be easy for the victorious army to continue its march into Catalonia, and there, joining with the remnant of Charles's forces, re-establish affairs in the Peninsula.

The commanders upon whom it devolved to carry this scheme into execution were the Duke of Savoy and Prince Eugene. The former was not averse to the enterprise. But a year before he had almost despaired of preserving his dominions. He was now ambitious to enlarge them. If the Allies continued to prosper it might well happen that when a peace came to be negotiated Louis would be compelled to relinquish any small portion of his kingdom that might actually be in the occupation of a member of the Alliance. The Duke would have modestly preferred to confine his energies and those of his cousin to a thorough and complete subjugation of the province of Dauphiné. But to this curtailment of the plan he knew that the maritime Powers would not agree; and his spirits were sufficiently sanguine to inspire him with the belief that the conquest and even the permanent retention of Provence were not altogether beyond possibility. There was disaffection in all this part of France on account of religion. It might be, therefore, that the inhabitants would prefer a new master, and would throw into the scale such small power as people possess in contradistinction to princes. In any case, whether the undertaking succeeded or not, he was to be well paid for his services by England and Holland.

The Emperor regarded the project in a very different light.

He could gain nothing by the capture of Toulon. The destruction of the French fleet and dockyards might be of incalculable advantage to the English and Dutch, but would add nothing to his power or security, nor one square mile to his territory. It was not until strong pressure had been brought to bear upon him by the maritime Powers that he at length gave a reluctant consent that his troops should assist in the scheme. But neither remonstrances nor threats could divert him from sending twelve thousand of those troops to the south of Italy.

It had been long known at the French Court that some scheme of invasion was in progress. Tessé had been accordingly appointed to guard the southern frontier. The notions of the Savoyard and Imperial troops were, however, so extraordinary during all the spring months as to bewilder the Marshal. He found himself necessitated to watch all the passes of the maritime alps from Mont Cenis to Nice. Up to nearly the close of June he remained in uncertainty as to the quarter upon which the storm would burst. He then, however, received sure information that Toulon was the object of attack, and commenced, although rather late, energetic preparations for the defence of that city. Toulon was but very poorly fortified. So many generations had lived and died since it had been threatened by an enemy, that the walls were crumbling through neglect, and the moat was half filled with rubbish. Six thousand pioneers were, however, set to work upon the fortifications: orders were despatched to several divisions to hasten towards the city: ships were sunk at the entrance of the harbour; and the adjacent country for some miles round, after an abundant supply of provisions had been brought within the walls, was laid waste. It would be useless, Tessé wrote to his master, to attempt to prevent the Allies from entering the kingdom, but he would answer for the safety of Toulon, provided only the various divisions of his army, whom he had ordered to concentrate in the neighbourhood of the city, were in time.*

Meanwhile the Allied army, thirty-five thousand strong, crossed the Col di Tendé, passed through Nice, and commenced winding its way through the hilly country bordering the

* Mémoires de Tessé; Campagne d'Italie; Lettres Historiques.

Mediterranean. The roads were bad, the heat was overpowering, and water was scarce. Sixteen days were consumed in accomplishing a distance of not more than eighty miles. Upon the 26th of July, however, the army was in sight of Toulon. The maritime Powers had not been guilty of any neglect in attending to their part in the arrangements. Shovel, with a fleet of forty ships of war, was already off the coast, and ready to assist, as far as he found it practicable, the operations of the land forces.

The Allied commanders with their staffs assembled on a hill which commanded a view of the city, and held a council of war. It was seen that the fortifications themselves were, notwithstanding the hasty repairs which had been made to them, of no great strength; but on one side of Toulon was an entrenched camp, and information which had been received on the road left no doubt but that this camp was occupied by at least twenty thousand men. The preparations, indeed, which had been made in so short a time, astounded all observers. It seemed, to use the expression of an eye-witness, as if all the cannon in Europe had been suddenly conjured into the neighbourhood. Batteries guarded every avenue which led to the city. The hills, moreover, which rose behind it, were secured by fortifications, and it was evident that, unless these fortifications could be destroyed, Toulon could not be properly invested. Even Eugene's heart sank within him as he surveyed the obstacles which would have to be overcome. This city, he declared, presented more difficulties in the way of a siege than any city he had ever seen. It was his deliberate opinion that the wisest course would be to turn back without sacrificing the lives of the soldiers in an impracticable undertaking. But in this opinion the Duke of Savoy would not concur. The English Government had taken the precaution to send an envoy after him into the field, and this gentleman never lost an opportunity of representing to his Highness the good offices he might expect from the maritime Powers if the enterprise were carried out, and the indignation they would feel if it were given over. Victor Amadeus, therefore, still was, or pretended to be, sanguine of success, and could not refrain from some sarcasms upon the prudence exhibited by his celebrated cousin, which

aroused bitter resentment in the breast of the latter. Under these circumstances the siege was commenced in the usual form; but the Imperial officers were in a state of complete despondency, and the work proceeded slowly. Three weeks were consumed in obtaining a few trifling advantages. At the end of that time the force under Tessé had been increased by such continual additions that it now far outnumbered that of the besiegers. Accounts came, moreover, that troops were marching upon Toulon from all quarters—from Roussillon, from Catalonia, from Germany, and from Flanders. The Allied army was literally starving, so effectually had the country around been converted into a desert; and the fleet, which might have remedied this calamity to some extent, was again and again driven off the coast by adverse winds. No resource remained, therefore, but to retreat; and it was perhaps fortunate that Tessé showed no disposition to hinder the departure of his adversaries. The army eventually regained the plains of Piedmont, diminished to one half its original strength through sickness and desertion.*

The fleet, which had proved almost useless during the siege, rendered good service in carrying off the sick and wounded. A portion of the ships was allotted for this duty, and set sail for Finale. With the remainder, fifteen in number, Shovel took his departure for England. Upon the 22nd of October the squadron found itself becalmed somewhere off the Scilly Islands. A dense fog lay over the sea, and the ships lay-to until night was closing in, when a favourable breeze sprang up, and the Admiral issued his orders to sail. His own ship, the *Association*, led the way. In about two hours she was observed to be making signals. Before two minutes had elapsed, however, her lights suddenly disappeared. Five ships, which were following in her wake, quickly found themselves on the rocks. One of them was borne off again by the force of the waves: the crews of two others had just time to take to the boats, and save their lives: the remaining two foundered, like the *Association*, with every soul on board.

Some miscalculation in the reckoning seems to have been the

* A very minute journal of this expedition is given both in Boyer and the Lettres Historiques; Mémoires de Tessé; Campagne d'Italie; St. Simon.

cause of this terrible disaster, which deprived the country of at least twelve hundred of her seamen and of her best admiral. Shovel's body was washed on shore at St. Mary's Island, and buried by the fishermen who found it. But an emerald ring, which had been stolen from one of the fingers, was identified, and led to inquiries. The body was discovered, exhumed, embalmed, and taken to London to receive the honour of interment in Westminster Abbey. Cloudesley Shovel was born in humble circumstances, and had raised himself to the highest rank in the service from a position which had been originally no better than that of cabin-boy.* But this was a period in the annals of our navy when such rises were not uncommon. His first captain, Sir John Narborough, had commenced his career under no better auspices. Not a few indeed of the captains of the seventeenth and the earlier part of the eighteenth centuries were men who had once served before the mast. That aristocratic system, which afterwards interposed an impassable gulf between the class of seamen and the class of officers, was not yet in existence. The era of midshipmen or naval cadets was of later date. The son of a gentleman who now enters the service, enters with the degree of an officer, and with the certainty, unless he is remarkably dull or ill conducted, of rising to the rank of commander. But the son of a gentleman who entered the service in the age of Anne, had no recognised position; and failing interest to push him, had no better chance of working his way up than an ordinary sailor. The consequence was that, although Englishmen were always vastly proud of their maritime supremacy, it was a rare practice for gentlemen to send their sons to sea; and any youth of good family who might be found in the service was sure to have been instigated to enter it by the thirst for glory, or an unconquerable love of adventure.

The invasion of Provence had, however, not been altogether without advantage to the Allies. It prevented the several bodies of troops, which the forethought of Louis had assembled near the Spanish frontier, from swooping down upon the dejected remnant of the Allied army which still retained possession of Catalonia. The events which had taken place

* Biographia Britannica.

since the overthrow of Galway and Das Minas at Almanza may be briefly related. Berwick had met with little opposition to his arms. Valencia and Aragon had been indeed abandoned to their fate. In the essentially necessary seaports of Denia and Alicante strong garrisons had been left, sufficient to set the French for the present at defiance. But the rest of the country was at the mercy of the victorious army. Town after town surrendered to receive at the hands of Philip the punishment for having rebelled. The inhabitants of Xativa, in which place Galway had left an English regiment, instead of propitiating their sovereign by a ready submission, chose to signalise their courage by one of those fierce and desperate defences for which Spaniards have been remarkable since the days of Hannibal. A breach in the feeble wall was soon effected, and the French poured in, but only to find the population awaiting them behind barricades thrown across the streets, one in rear of another, at intervals of fifteen yards. Then commenced a struggle between professional soldiers, whose operations were directed by the cool judgment of a practised general, and a multitude frantic with enthusiasm. Men, women, children, priests, mingled together behind the entrenchments, fought like madmen. The houses on each side of the street became batteries, and shot forth a continuous and deadly stream of missiles. From house to house and from street to street this fearful warfare was kept up during a period of eight days. But at length the French cannon had beaten down the last barricade, and the soldiers, infuriated by losses, wounds, and what most exasperates this class of men, the resistance of civilians, rushed through the defenceless town to revenge themselves by an indiscriminate pillage and massacre. To the English, who had withdrawn into the enclosure of the castle, honourable terms were granted; but Berwick determined that the punishment of the townspeople of Xativa should operate as a warning throughout Spain. The survivors of the carnage were transported to Castile, and the penalty of death was pronounced against any who should presume to return into Valencia. The town, with the exception of the principal church, was razed to the ground: the plough was drawn over its site; and a pyramid was erected with an inscription that Xativa was

destroyed for having rebelled against its King and country.* Around the church and castle gathered in the course of time a new town; but the name of San Felipe, derived from the avenging sovereign, still attests the penitence of the present inhabitants for the sins of a preceding generation. Even upon those towns which made no resistance, the hands of the conquerors were heavily laid. The opportunity was seized to suppress those ancient liberties and privileges which the kingdoms of Valencia and Aragon retained after falling under the dominion of Castile. A royal edict, which the mightiest kings of Spain had been too just or too timid to issue, was now fulminated against a third part of the whole population of the monarchy by a prince of an entirely new dynasty, and whose throne the half of Europe was bent on overturning.†

The French found no further opponents to their progress until they reached the frontier of Catalonia. There Galway successfully defended the passage of the Ebro. Lerida, upon the western side of the province, made a protracted resistance. The governor, a son of the Prince of Darmstadt, after all chance of saving the city was at an end, absurdly neglected to make terms, and the French, having forced an entrance, subjected Lerida to the horrors of a capture by storm. The close of 1707 found the Allies stripped of all their conquests in Spain with the exception of the province of Catalonia.

While these events were passing abroad, matters at home had been taking a turn which caused grave disquietude to Godolphin and Marlborough. It may be allowed that no two persons were ever better adapted to exercise power without exciting enemies than the easy, good-humoured Treasurer, and the Captain-general, who, while visibly the greatest subject in Europe, was still as unassuming in his manners and as anxious to conciliate every class of men as when he was a poor and obscure ensign. Through a course of five years their monopoly of power, although sharply arraigned by the disappointed and envious, had never been shaken. Anne had quietly acquiesced in their weeding out of the administration those extreme Tories who manifested their disapproval of the war. Hedges and

* Mémoires de Berwick; Lettres Historiques.
† Lettres Historiques.

Harley, secretaries who seemed to wear the almost colourless livery of their patrons, were perfectly acceptable to her; for in reputation, at least, they were Tories and upholders of the Church.

If this state of things could have been perpetuated the two friends would have been well pleased. But from the commencement of the reign the Whigs had been able to command a slight majority in the House of Lords, and the elections of 1705 had raised them to something like numerical equality with their rivals in the House of Commons. The manner in which the great influence they now enjoyed in the State had been acquired, was in the highest degree creditable to them. Thirty years before a Whig who presented himself at the hustings ran, unless he was a man of considerable territorial importance, a strong risk of being pelted for a republican and a regicide. The current of popular feeling had been stemmed by dint of superior education, intelligence, and energy alone. The tyranny of James and the revulsion of sentiment which his tyranny engendered in all classes of his subjects, had suddenly raised the Whigs to a commanding position. They had borne the chief part in the Revolution, and in placing William on the throne. Since that time they had been occasionally overshadowed by the swarms of country gentlemen whose political creed consisted merely in hearty contempt and hatred of foreigners, Papists, and Dissenters, and in an indiscriminating attachment to the Church. But the wars with France had then arisen to their aid. At every crisis when it became apparent to the nation that its liberties were endangered by the ambition of Louis, the men who tried to win the electors with the promise of a crusade against the enemies of the Church, had to succumb to the more manly orators who called upon their hearers to support their sovereign in a just and necessary war against the enemies of freedom and the country.

The accession of Anne, who notoriously shared all the feelings of the extreme Tories, overcast the prospects of the Whigs. From the sovereign even the brightest ornaments of the party could expect nothing but neglect and disdain; and it was soon evident, moreover, that the fickle population had changed sides. The country testified its devotion to the

new Queen by sending up to Westminster just such a Parliament as, it was thought, would be most congenial to her. But again circumstances came to the help of the party. In three years the victories of Marlborough had filled the nation with military ardour: the passion for war was for the moment stronger than the passion for religion: the Tories had damaged themselves in popular estimation by their tyrannical abuse of power; and the Whigs, who might be depended upon for zealous supporters of the war, were once more in favour. Their strength lay not merely in their having the majority in one House, and perhaps also in the other. They were as a party really the superiors of their rivals both in natural and acquired abilities. By the side of such a galaxy of talent as was represented by their leaders, Somers, Wharton, Halifax, Orford, and Sunderland, now termed the Junta, the greatest Tory names looked pale. The commercial men, the men of letters were, with few exceptions, Whigs. It would be no great exaggeration to say that at this early period in the history of modern parties the Whigs represented almost all the intelligence of the country. Scarcely a Tory could be found who was not either a dull man, an ignorant man or an interested man.*

Such being the position, it was not strange that the Whigs should consider themselves entitled to a chief share in the administration of the Government, and to a large proportion of those places of dignity and emolument which the sovereign constantly had it in her power to bestow. Godolphin was rendered miserable by their importunities. Not an appointment fell vacant but the unhappy Treasurer was driven by threats into the royal presence to demand it for a friend of the party. The consequence of his unseasonable solicitations was soon apparent. To a mind like Anne's the importance, in a political sense, of gratifying the Whigs could not be made manifest. To bestow favours on such men was to reward iniquity. Her

* The only two men of high intellect on the Tory side during this reign are St. John and Swift. The former had very little of the real Tory in his composition. He cared nothing for the Church: he had not the smallest inclination to persecute the Dissenters except in so far as the measure might be necessary to gratify the ignorant crowd of rustic members. He saw, however, a leading part open to him as a Tory: he could not hope to gain more than a subordinate position as a Whig. Swift began as a Whig, and went over to Harley and St. John from mixed motives of friendship and ambition.

conscience revolted from the commission of such a sin against God and the people He had placed under her charge. Poor Mr. Montgomery, that counsellor without whom Anne had once declared that her life would be a burden, could at length disguise from himself no longer that the advice he had been compelled to give had converted him into an object of dislike and terror. From the sulky looks of the sovereign who regarded him as a tool of the Whigs, he had to return to meet the frowns of the tyrants, who could not be convinced that his failure to gratify them arose from any cause but his own want of zeal in their behalf, and who blustered and threatened more vigorously than ever. To his absent friend in the Netherlands he freely communicated his griefs; but even the fine understanding of Marlborough could devise no remedy for the case but patience and resignation.

For a long time past Godolphin had entertained a suspicion that some one besides himself was giving her Majesty advice. He had imparted his uneasiness on this subject to Marlborough while the latter was in England. During the spring, however, evidence that the Queen was in the habit of holding secret conferences accumulated, and at length in June occurred a circumstance that scarcely left the matter in doubt. Two bishoprics, those of Exeter and Chester, had become vacant: the imperious Whigs demanded them both for their friends, and the Treasurer was forced into the royal closet to make application for them. To his amazement the Queen replied that the bishoprics were already promised. She had, she said, engaged herself to bestow them on Sir William Dawes and Dr. Blackhall. That Anne could, without prompting, have made choice of these clergymen was hardly within the range of possibility. Two things, in fact, became clear to Godolphin. He was no longer the recipient of her Majesty's confidence, and some more congenial counsellor had supplanted him. As little doubt remained, moreover, as to who the interloper was. The evidence pointed unmistakeably to the respectable, wise-looking Secretary Harley as the person who had insinuated himself into the royal favour, and who was pampering her Majesty's prejudices against the Whigs.*

* See the correspondence of this period in Coxe's Memoirs.

The alarming discovery was at once communicated to Marlborough. He fully shared all the uneasiness of his friends. In several letters, which were perhaps intended to be shown to the Queen, he referred to the subject. "If," he remarked in a letter to his son-in-law, "this disunion between the Queen and the Lord Treasurer continues, destruction must be the consequence, as the circumstances of our affairs are abroad as well as at home. If she inclines more to be governed by the notions of Mr. Harley than those of Mr. Montgomery, I would sooner lose my life than persuade him to continue in her service." "If," he wrote to Godolphin, "Mrs. Morley's prejudice to some people is so unalterable, and she will be disposing of the preferments now vacant to such as will tear to pieces her friends and servants, that must create distraction. But my opinion was, and is yet, that you ought to take with you Mr. Secretary Harley, and let the Queen see, with all the freedom and plainness imaginable, her true interest. When she is sensible of that, there will be no more difficulty. If there should be, you will have performed your duty, and God's will be done. For my own part I see in almost every country people act so extremely against their own advantage, that I fear we have deserved to be punished."*

But the discovery that Mrs. Morley no longer honoured Mr. Montgomery with her confidence, was soon followed by the still more alarming discovery that Mrs. Morley had secrets even from Mrs. Freeman. The Duchess had lighted upon a notable conspiracy. A poor relation of hers whom, as she was fond of boasting, she had made one of the Queen's dressers out of charity, had recently got married. For some purpose it had been deemed advisable to keep the marriage private. But the waiting-woman, as it now appeared, had had the audacity to take the Queen into her confidence. Anne had honoured the couple with her presence at the ceremony, and had bestowed a handsome present upon her servant. All this had been done without a syllable having been breathed to the Duchess upon the subject.

Abigail Hill, a lady destined to be instrumental in changing the administration of this country at a critical period, was the

* Marlborough to Godolphin, June 27, July 8.

daughter of a ruined merchant. Her mother stood in the near relationship of aunt to Lady Marlborough, but it is not surprising that the great court favourite should have been in ignorance of the existence of her humble connection until the latter was driven by extreme penury to make herself known. Lady Marlborough was disposed to be generous, when generosity could be practised without injury to that fortune which she and her husband were so sedulously amassing. The children of Mrs. Hill were, one after another, provided for in the civil service or in the royal household. One boy was placed in the Custom House: another was made groom of the bedchamber to the infant Duke of Gloucester: Abigail became an attendant of the Princess Anne; and her younger sister received what was probably the excellent appointment of laundress to the royal child.* The duties of Abigail appear to have been exactly those of a lady's maid; duties which, it is to be presumed, can rarely be performed, even in the case of a queen, without engendering some amount of conversation. As long as Mrs. Freeman reigned in the heart of Mrs. Morley, there was little chance of this intercourse warming into friendship. But the reign of Mrs. Freeman ceased: Anne needed a human being to whom she might confide her miseries: her husband was too stolid to be much of a comforter; and the waiting-woman was always at hand, humble, assiduous, and sympathising. The Queen was indeed wretched. All her old friends had gone astray. They were all in a conspiracy with the godless Whigs, and nothing, it seemed, would content them except that she should imperil her own soul by joining them in their wrong courses.

The discovery that Anne had been present at the marriage of Abigail with Samuel Masham, an equerry of the Prince of Denmark, first revealed to the Duchess that she had a rival in the royal affections. Such a discovery would very much have dejected an ordinary favourite, but in the mind of Mrs. Freeman it awakened no emotion but indignation. She assailed the Queen with reproaches for keeping the matter from her. She quoted Montaigne to show that friends ought to have no secrets from each other, because to tell a thing to a

* Conduct of the Duchess.

friend was nothing more than to tell it to one's self. But now her suspicions took a new track. For some time past it had been a wonder how Mrs. Morley, who had never had a thought in her head but what was placed there by Mrs. Freeman, should have become so obstinate, so rebellious to the advice of her old friends. Yet the wonder ceased when it was known that there was a sly thing always about her to foster her prejudices, and encourage her in a mutinous spirit. She now remembered that once when she was conversing with the Queen, to whose chamber she had access by a private way, this creature bounced into the room with the boldest and gayest air imaginable; but, at sight of her, stopped, changed countenance, and dropping a low courtesy, inquired, "Did your Majesty ring?"* Soon, evidence of a character to corroborate her suspicions was received. Abigail was, on her father's side, as nearly connected with Harley as, on her mother's side, she was connected with herself. The Harleys had formerly been, or professed to be, in the same ignorance as herself with regard to their poor relations, the Hills. But latterly the Secretary had been assiduous in cultivating the acquaintance of his cousin. He was in the habit of paying frequent visits to her at the palace. In short, the conspiracy seemed plain. Harley was offering suggestions and counsel on political matters to Abigail, and Abigail repeated what he said to the Queen.

That a lady of the Duchess's temper should conceive a suspicion of this kind, and keep it to herself until positive proof had been obtained of its justness, was of course impossible. Mrs. Freeman wrote to Mrs. Morley, complaining bitterly, and of course insolently, that a tattling bedchamber woman should have the impertinence to interfere in matters of business. The reply of Mrs. Morley was meek and gentle as usual, but it contained a sarcasm which showed that she was offended. Others, she said, who had formerly been in Mrs. Masham's station, had been tattling and impertinent. But Masham had no such faults. She never encouraged Mrs. Morley in her prejudices, nor meddled in anything. The Duchess, convinced that her royal friend was now equivocating, imparted her suspicions to her husband; but Marlborough, who perhaps

* Conduct of the Duchess.

thought that his wife was only in rather a worse temper than ordinarily, attached at first but little importance to them. If, he answered, she were sure that Mrs. Masham did speak to the Queen about business, it would be advisable to caution her; and Mrs. Masham, who, he thought, must feel grateful for the kindness she had received, would no doubt mind what was said. The Duchess both spoke and wrote to the imagined traitress. Abigail was all astonishment at the imputations which had been cast upon her. They must, she said, have been instilled into her Grace's mind by some malicious story-teller.

It soon appeared, however, that Godolphin was of the same opinion as the Duchess. The perplexities of the unhappy Treasurer were great indeed. In the general eye he filled the position of principal adviser to the Queen, and every measure taken by royalty was naturally attributed to his counsels. The Whigs had been rendered furious by the appointment of the Tory clergymen, and were threatening all manner of evils when the Parliament should again assemble. The two friends kept up a continual correspondence. Marlborough wrote several letters to his wife and to Godolphin, which were probably all of them intended to be shown to the Queen. If was the purport of these letters, Mrs. Morley persisted in bestowing her confidence on other parties, the only course open to Mr. Freeman and Mr. Montgomery would be to resign. It was necessary that her Majesty should either put her business entirely into Mr. Harley's hands, or follow the measures of the Lord Treasurer. Anne appears to have been somewhat alarmed by the tone of these epistles, and wrote to the Duke, asseverating that the rumours which had reached him were utterly without foundation. She had followed, she pleaded, the plans which had been agreed upon when he himself was with her. She could not think that her appointment of two such worthy clergymen as Dawes and Blackhall was any breach of her engagements. She was aware that there were persons who represented that they were recommended to her by Mr. Harley; but this was so far from being true that Mr. Harley knew nothing of the matter till it was the talk of the whole town. She considered herself bound to fill the bishops' bench with persons who would be a credit to it, and not always to take

the recommendations which were made to her in the interest of the Whigs. As for the assertion of Lady Marlborough, that she had an entire confidence in Mr. Harley, she wondered how Lady Marlborough could say such a thing, when she had so often assured her she relied entirely upon none but Mr. Freeman and Mr. Montgomery.*

Marlborough was not satisfied. Either Anne could not or would not regard the matter from a political point of view. The question was not one touching the worth and piety of the two clergymen she had thought fit to promote, but whether her responsible Ministers should really have that influence in controlling her patronage which the nation considered they possessed. As far as his own personal feelings were concerned, he had perhaps even less partiality for the Whigs as a party than for the Tories. The extreme men of each faction he held in about equal abhorrence. But it had become ingrained in his composition that a vigorous prosecution of the war was the sole means of preserving the prosperity and liberties of the country; and it was now evident that the Whigs had the upper hand in the Parliament, and that they were disposed, if gratified upon some points, to give him cordial support. From the Tories he could expect at best but a grudging acquiescence in his schemes. In his mind, therefore, there was no doubt as to the expediency, and even necessity, of conciliating the Whigs, and it was a distressing thought that the silly prejudices of the Queen should stand in the way of the national interest. Again he wrote to Anne, in a strain of earnest, pathetic, and affectionate remonstrance. For the interests of the Whigs he had no concern. If her Majesty were served to her satisfaction and security, he was indifferent as to whom she employed. "As you desire that I would speak freely, I do protest in the presence of God Almighty my persuasion that, if you continue in the mind I think you now are, and will not suffer those who have the honour to serve you to manage your affairs agreeably to the circumstances of the times, your business will inevitably run into confusion." Of such overwhelming importance did it seem to Marlborough that the Whigs should be restored to good

* The Queen to Marlborough, undated.

humour before the meeting of Parliament, that his letter contained the following offer. "If your Majesty thinks my being with you for one day or two might be of any use, I am ready to obey. If I come in a yacht, one man-of-war should be ordered to Ostend, and not be told what it is for; for I would endeavour to be back with the army before the French should know I am gone for England."*

But this appeal, touching as was the language in which it was conveyed, and coming as it did from the most successful and famous of living men, might as well, for any effect it produced, have been addressed to a marble statue. Anne, it now appeared, was, upon questions in which her religious feelings were aroused, as obstinate and as impervious to argument as had been her unfortunate father. In despair of effecting any change in her sentiments, Godolphin now communicated to Harley the suspicions of himself and the Duke that the alteration in the Queen's behaviour towards them arose from the surreptitious counsels he administered to her. Harley, like Abigail, was all astonishment at the charge. So false and wicked a tale could have been engendered only by the diabolical invention of the Whigs. He must have incurred their anger by the devotion he had shown to his patrons. It was their delight to strike in the dark at those who evinced zeal and integrity in performing their duty. This was the way they had chosen to ruin him. Such was his fidelity to his Lordship and the Duke, that, if they should say Harrow or Maidenhead was the nearest way to Windsor, he would agree, provided only his conscience were excused from swearing to it. Harley lost no time in conveying to Marlborough the grief which such unfounded accusations had occasioned him. He had the satisfaction of his own mind that he had served his Grace and the Lord Treasurer with the nicest honour, and by the strictest rules of friendship. And now, it seemed, he was to be sacrificed to sly insinuations and groundless jealousies. He had never interfered in the putting in or putting out of any person, and was quite unacquainted with the two clergymen her Majesty had made bishops. Neither directly nor indirectly

* Marlborough to the Queen, September 15—26.

had he recommended them. He was above telling a lie: he scorned such baseness.*

Thus all the three persons who were suspected of conspiring against the domination of the Marlboroughs, the Queen, the bedchamber woman, and the Secretary, had been separately taxed with the design, and all three had distinctly and emphatically asserted their innocence. It is just possible that they spoke the truth. Mrs. Masham, unlike the Duchess, never made any revelations to the public as to what passed between the Queen and herself. But we have it on the authority of Swift, who was upon the most intimate terms with Mrs. Masham, that, at a later period, this lady contrived several clandestine interviews between her Majesty and Harley.

Godolphin saw with uneasiness the day approach upon which the Parliament was to reassemble. The Whig leaders, infuriated by their disappointment about the two bishoprics, would listen to no excuses. There was certain information that they were concerting measures to embarrass the Government with their old antagonists, the Tories. The perplexed Treasurer would have gladly postponed the dreaded day until his friend, whose influence he still thought irresistible, had had an opportunity of remonstrating personally with Anne. But the reasons against any further prorogation of the Parliament were numerous and weighty. The supplies for next year were urgently needed. His friends, moreover, he thought would be discouraged, and his adversaries put in heart, if it were surmised that he was shrinking from the encounter. On the 23rd of October, therefore, the Parliament—the same which had sate at Westminster for two years, but with the addition of the Scotch members, which constituted it the first Parliament of Great Britain—was suffered to re-assemble.

Still, however, Godolphin, who could ill support the angry and revengeful looks which were bent upon him from all sides of the House, struggled to procure a respite. Upon technical grounds it was deemed advisable to treat this Parliament as a new one. The Commons, therefore, were directed to choose a Speaker, who should be presented to her Majesty seven days later. On

* Letters of Harley in Coxe's Memoirs. See Burnet's remarks on these intrigues.

the 30th of October the Houses were again adjourned for a week. As by that time Godolphin had learned that Marlborough was on his way to England, he ventured to place the speech in the royal hands. Anne congratulated her subjects upon the accomplishment of the Union, glossed over the failure of the Toulon expedition, set against the loss of Spain the gain of Italy by the Imperial troops, and exhorted the Commons to provide liberally for the ensuing campaign.

The Houses again adjourned for a few days, and when they re-assembled, Achilles was seen by the side of Patroclus. But the presence of the hero failed to overawe a set of opponents who had organised their plans, and who were conscious of possessing both a numerical superiority in the House of Lords and an unrivalled superiority in the weapons of Parliamentary warfare. The Whigs had, in fact, determined to teach the two monopolists of Court favour that their influence must either be exerted exclusively in their interest, or that it must be renounced altogether. Rochester, Nottingham, and Buckingham stood prepared to support the onset of Wharton, Halifax, and Somers. Upon the usual motion for an address of thanks to her Majesty, Wharton began the battle by descanting upon the state to which the circumstances of the country had been reduced by the war. If the exportation of coin to supply the wants of the armies, he remarked, went on at the present rate, there would be soon none left. It was lamentable to see, as he had done with his own eyes, the straits to which the poor farmers were already reduced to pay their rent. The entire speech, which was doubtless a fine example of Wharton's extraordinary skill in acting any part that suited his purpose, has not come down to us. But its tenour exhibits, in a striking light, the shamelessness of the statesmen of that age. The first outcry against the cost of the war we find raised, not by the Tories—who had from the first objected to the country taking part except as a naval power—but by the Whigs, who had been the steady supporters of that expensive system of continental warfare which William introduced. The subsequent conduct of the Whigs leaves us in no doubt that they were as firmly convinced as ever of the need of a vigorous prosecution of hostilities against France. But now, because they were not gratified with

every bauble they demanded, they were ready to throw obstacles in the way to reduce the Government to the necessity of concluding an inglorious peace. Somers followed his friend with a discourse upon the glaring faults which appeared in the conduct of the navy. The address was pressed on the side of the Ministers; but the Tories came to the support of the Whigs, and the combination proved overwhelming. A vote was passed to consider, before all other matters, the state of the nation, and a week afterwards the debate began in a committee of the whole House. Anne, according to her custom upon important occasions, attended in private to hear the speeches, and in the hope that her presence would moderate the warmth of the speakers.

Wharton commenced proceedings by presenting to the committee a petition signed by upwards of two hundred merchants of the City of London, and which prayed for a remedy to a grievance well calculated to excite public indignation. The supremacy of the English navy was a matter which no Englishman ever permitted either himself or others to question. Our countrymen may, in the outset of the war, have entertained some misgivings as to whether their own raw levies of soldiery were fitted to contend against the military veterans of France. But that the navy of England, when united with the navy of Holland, which ranked next it in efficiency, would exercise uncontrolled dominion over the seas, seemed a conclusion too demonstrable to admit of a doubt. Inferior, moreover, as the fleets of France and Spain had originally been, they had been still further weakened, in the first year of the war, by the destruction of some twenty line-of-battle ships in the harbour of Vigo. Under these circumstances the presumption was not unwarrantable that not only would the Allied navies ravage hostile coasts, bombard towns, and act as important auxiliaries to the land forces, but would be able to extend such ample protection to the commerce of the two Powers, that merchant ships might pass from one country to another as securely as in times of profound peace. But events had turned out in a manner very different from what had been expected. Every year had it become more evident that the English navy, splendid and costly as it was, did little service beyond conveying

troops and stores to Portugal or Spain. On the other hand the French navy, reduced as it was, had been all activity. The captains of Louis, it appeared, whom the pride of Englishmen predicted would be cooped up without a chance of escape in the harbours of Brest or Dunkirk, did not only manage to get out whenever they pleased, and roam about the ocean very much at their leisure, but to do most effective work. Since the commencement of the war they had made captures of or destroyed no fewer than thirteen line-of-battle ships, besides twice that number of inferior vessels carrying from four to thirty-two guns.*

But the losses of the navy, discreditable as they were to those who controlled its operations, sank into insignificance beside the tremendous losses which the mercantile interest had sustained through the supineness and neglect of Prince George's council. The merchants complained that the Downs were constantly crowded by vessels bound for Virginia, Portugal, or Flanders, waiting month after month in the hope that the promises which had been held out of convoy would be fulfilled. To sail without protection would be madness, for so infested was the Channel and even the English coast with French privateers, that if a merchantman succeeded in compassing the distance between Shoreham and Portsmouth, its good fortune was considered almost miraculous. It was seldom, until all the merchandise which was of a perishable description had become worthless, and until all the expected profits of the venture had been consumed in seamen's wages and victuals, that two or three of her Majesty's ships, the worst adapted for the service in the whole navy, received orders for sailing. Several instances were furnished of these aggravating delays. In 1704 a fleet of merchantmen, laden with corn for Portugal, had been kept waiting for seven months at Spithead; and the consequence was that the Portuguese Government transferred its orders in the next year to the Dutch. Fifty-five vessels with cargoes for Flanders were, in the early part of 1707, detained five months for an opportunity to cross the channel to Ostend. The Jamaica merchants, it was stated, had abandoned their business in despair. It seemed that no representation

* Boyer, Appendix.

could teach the people of the Admiralty the necessity of attending to times and seasons in trading to a tropical climate. Arrangements were so made that the ships reached the West Indies during the sickly months, and the sailors were exposed to the ravages of yellow fever. Her Majesty's captains, it appeared also, if short of hands, made no scruple about impressing the crews of merchantmen, leaving the latter to the mercy of the equinoctial gales, which they were certain to encounter on their way home.*

The convoy, furnished after heart-breaking delays, usually consisted of two, never of more than four, fourth or fifth-rate ships. This force might be sufficient to protect its charges against privateers; but if, as too often happened, a hostile squadron was encountered, not only the merchantmen but their guards also terminated their voyage in a French harbour. Since the outbreak of the war between eleven and twelve hundred vessels, more or less richly laden, had fallen a prey to the enemy. Three frightful disasters had occurred within the present year. In the spring convoy had been requested for a fleet bound for Archangel. The answer returned by the Council was that one fourth and two fifth-rates should form the escort. As there were rumours that the Chevalier de Fourbin was cruising about the channel, the merchants made some demur about the slenderness of this provision for their safety. They were officially informed that there was no reason for fear, inasmuch as notice had been received at the Admiralty that the Chevalier had sailed westward. The correctness of this information was soon proved in a very melancholy fashion. A fleet of fifty-six sail was then on the point of departure for Portugal under convoy of three ships of war. The council of Prince George was so strangely indifferent to the future as to permit this fleet to weigh anchor without sending to the captains the least hint of Fourbin's movements. Hardly were the unlucky merchantmen out of the Downs when the enemy hove in sight. The three Englishmen did all that valour and seamanship could effect against overwhelming odds, but the result was the capture of two of her Majesty's ships and of twenty-one of their charges. The French admiral returned with his prizes to

* Address of the Lords, Boyer, Appendix.

Dunkirk, repaired his squadron with the utmost diligence, and in a few weeks was in a condition to avail himself of information which put him on the scent of a fresh prey. By this time the fleet had sailed for Archangel. At the urgent instances of the merchants, whom Fourbin had inspired with a wholesome terror, orders were given to Admiral Whetstone to see the fleet as far as the Shetland isles. For a month all went well. Whetstone, having reached the limit of his instructions, turned back, leaving to their ordinary convoy of one fourth and two fifth-rates the merchantmen, who continued their voyage in safety round the North cape. In the distant and little known sea that was now being navigated, all fears of meeting an enemy had passed away, and the ships were straggling widely, when before the eyes of the crews in the more advanced vessels arose the apparition of the French flag. The luckless charges huddled as quickly as possible under the wing of their protectors; but it was soon apparent that the protectors were as helpless as themselves. On the following day the dreaded Chevalier was upon them with a force that precluded resistance. The English men-of-war succeeded in saving themselves. Nine merchantmen were promptly boarded, pillaged, and set on fire. Eight more took refuge in the little fortified port of Vardoehuus. The Danish officer in command endeavoured to interpose in their behalf; but upon being sternly informed that, if he fired a gun, his fort should be laid in ruins, he prudently permitted the French to execute their will. With every ship of his squadron laden with plunder, Fourbin returned to Brest, and there found letters awaiting him that directed his immediate repair to court. Louis, it seems, had received intelligence of another English merchant fleet, consisting of no less than a hundred and thirty sail, which was on the point of departure for Portugal, and to which the careless Council had assigned for convoy only three third and two fourth-rates. The Chevalier flew back to Brest, was out to sea again without the loss of a day, was joined by another admiral, and upon the 21st of October was cruising off the Lizard with twelve good ships. His victims came on without a thought of the danger that was awaiting them. The English men-of-war, although taken completely by surprise, fought with their accustomed devotion.

The French, however, were more than two to one, and were under the control of an admiral who had not at that time his match in our navy. Three of the Queen's ships were forced to succumb: a fourth, after bravely maintaining the fight for several hours, effected its escape: the fifth, a noble vessel of eighty guns and manned by five hundred sailors, blew up, and only two souls survived the disaster. But the prolonged resistance of these worthy but ill-fated protectors had given time to the merchantmen to save themselves in all directions. Thirty-two only were taken; and with these and his three more glorious prizes, the thrice-fortunate Chevalier returned again to Brest.*

The petition of the merchants could leave no doubt in any mind that the management of the navy had for some time past been in the hands of persons who were at least scandalously incompetent to conduct the high duties assigned to them. The purest spirit of patriotism might have actuated men in demanding that those who had brought disgrace upon the flag should be dismissed from power. But it soon appeared that patriotism was not the only motive which prompted the Whigs in disclosing such tremendous abuses in one of the most important departments of the Government. The head of that department was Prince George. Upon him no one ventured, or even cared, to reflect. It was not likely that his place would be accessible to the scramblers for office; and any attempt to remove him would assuredly draw down upon his assailant the wrath of that affectionate wife in whose gift lay every good thing. It seems, moreover, to have been generally conceded that, except in so far as stupidity and indolence become of themselves culpable in men who accept a high trust, the Prince was not to blame for the misfortunes which had occurred. But the places of his subordinates were not too high for hope. It was well known that the leading spirit in the Council had been, for some time past, a younger brother of Marlborough, Admiral George Churchill. The mental constitution of this man was the opposite of that of his illustrious relative. He was a Tory of the extreme school—virulent, domineering, and foolish. His tattling propensities, his habit of bragging, his insane love

* Lettres Historiques; Boyer; St. Simon.

of insulting political opponents, and the offence which this array of qualities gave to the Whigs, rendered him a perpetual thorn in Marlborough's side. To oust him from power was now, it seemed, the highest object which the party which presented the petition of the merchants had in view. His expulsion would certainly give pain to the hero, and would be no bad lesson to the two monopolisers of the royal favour of what the Whigs could effect if they were provoked.

To attack the favourite without seeming to glance at the Prince was no easy task for an orator; but the covert sneers and sarcasms which fell from Wharton were understood and rapturously applauded by his hearers. The Whigs, in the malicious humour in which they now were, were delighted with the rare spectacle of emotion which appeared in the serene and dignified countenance of Marlborough. He was observed, after Wharton resumed his seat, to walk over to that nobleman, and to converse with him for some time in an excited manner.* Meanwhile, the debate upon the state of the nation proceeded; but it was soon evident that differences had sprung up between the two parties which had for the occasion joined their forces, and that the cry of mismanagement grew more feeble from the Whigs in proportion as Tory speakers waxed more envenomed and more specific in their charges. The Whigs, in truth, were beginning to discover that, in calling attention to the misrule of a department of the administration, they had gone farther than was safe for their interests. They were by no means desirous of subverting the ministry of Godolphin. Indeed their own prospects were bound up with his continuance in power. If he fell, it was almost inevitable, having regard to Anne's strong inclination for the Tories, that his place would be occupied by a counsellor who would effectually prevent every Whig from approaching the Queen. The Tories, on the other hand, could see little hope of recovering their lost ground, except the whole family clique of the Marlboroughs was swept from their path. They were bent, therefore, upon imputing the misrule observable in Prince George's council to the supineness of the administration in general. The Council, it was argued, might be blamable in

* Tindal's continuation of Rapin.

the first instance; but this was a body unknown to the law. When faults occurred in any department of the state, it was fair to attribute them to those who were visibly honoured with the confidence of the sovereign. Haversham, who delivered his annual lament over the state of the nation, held dogmatically that all the misfortunes of the country, the impoverishment of its merchants, the decay of trade, the ruin of manufactures, the diminution of the revenues, could be ascribed to no one but the Ministers.*

The result of the debate was that an inquiry was directed into the truth of the allegations made by the merchants. This inquiry was prosecuted during the three following months. The petitioners were examined upon oath, and a copy of their depositions was furnished to the Lord High Admiral. An answer to the complaints was at length put forth in his name. It admitted, with an air of cool defiance, the truth of what had been stated. Churchill, who was probably the author, but who, with Prince George to cover him, felt that he had little to fear, condescended to offer a careless kind of justification for the charges made against the Council. There were not sufficient ships in the whole navy, he asserted, to do all that was required. It was not possible to keep up fleets in the Mediterranean, to provide strong convoys, and to maintain such a force in the channel as would keep it clear from privateers at the same time. Unfortunately for this justification, it was easy to prove by figures that, out of the forty thousand seamen allowed by Parliament, there never could have been at any one time in the Mediterranean above seventeen thousand, even supposing the ships composing the fleet to be manned at their full complement. A foolish sneer at the administration of the navy during the reign of William gave high provocation to the Whig peers. In the end, the House agreed upon presenting an address to her Majesty. It set forth a summary of the evidence given by the merchants, together with the answer put in by the Council, and inveighed in strong terms against the tone of the latter. There could be no plainer proof, the Lords remarked, that some persons employed by the Lord High Admiral made the worst use imaginable of the trust with which

* Parliamentary History; Boyer; Lettres Historiques.

he honoured them, than that such a document should have been submitted to them. The Tory peers strove hard to induce the House to lay the blame of the mismanagement at the door of the Ministers; but to this the Whigs would not agree. They were content with simply exhorting the Queen to make sea affairs her first and peculiar care, and to instruct those whom she honoured with her confidence to bestow the most watchful attention to the concerns of trade; and to this recommendation Anne replied in general terms.

Indeed, long before the framing of this address, the Whigs had become sensible of their error in combining for any purpose with the Tories; and their reconciliation with Godolphin and Marlborough appeared complete. They had on one occasion rendered a service to the hero for which he must have felt extremely grateful. Since the days of William it had been a part of the creed of such men as Rochester and Nottingham that, next to the folly of sending land forces to the Continent at all, the most egregious blunder this country could commit was to attack France from the side of the Netherlands. The northern frontier of Louis' dominions, it was argued, was practically impregnable. Even should an army succeed in forcing its way through a region which successive generations of engineers had employed all their skill to render impassable, and which was intersected by a hundred defensible streams, it would then find itself before a chain of fortresses that protected the frontier as with a wall of iron. Each one of those redoubtable bulwarks would have to be besieged and captured before an invasion of France could be attempted with safety; and not one of them, it might be relied upon, would fall before its assailants had incurred a weary expenditure of time, and ruinous losses in life and money. Hitherto, the boasted successes of the Allied armies in the Netherlands amounted to nothing, so far as any impression upon France was concerned. The real difficulties would only begin when the soldiers found themselves before Lille, Tournay, Valenciennes, Mons, Namur.

Upon one of the many days over which the debate on the state of the nation extended, Rochester seized an opportunity for expounding the views entertained by his party on this

subject. The affairs of Spain were then the subject of discussion. The question as to who was responsible for the evident mismanagement that appeared in this quarter had excited much angry contention between the rival factions. Speeches had, however, been made on each side in favour of making vigorous efforts to retrieve the disgrace. Rochester, perceiving that a majority was warmly set upon sending a considerable reinforcement to Spain, dexterously attempted to turn this mood to advantage. "If," he remarked, "the main object of this war be to establish Charles upon the throne, the sending of our best troops to Flanders, and allowing Spain to be lost for want of men, appears like neglecting the principal for the accessory design. I remember that the old Duke of Schomberg used to say that to attack France through the Netherlands was like seizing a bull by the horns. As we have not soldiers enough to carry out our plans efficiently in both countries, it will surely be better to starve the war in Flanders than in Spain. I move, therefore, that for the future we content ourselves with standing on the defensive in the first-named country, and send a detachment of fifteen or twenty thousand men from the army of the Netherlands to Catalonia."

Nottingham, with many complaints against the Ministers for the indifference which they had shown to the interests of the Allies in Spain, seconded the motion. It was but rarely that Marlborough condescended to open his lips in a House which to him appeared perhaps as little better than an arena in which violent and wrong-headed orators were perpetually worrying and trying to foil one another. But this insidious attempt to reduce the army of the Netherlands stung him beyond endurance. He started to his feet, and combated the motion with a vehemence which, proceeding from a being generally so dispassionate, astounded his hearers. The army in Flanders, he contended, should be augmented rather than diminished if it was expected to hold the conquered towns. A single battalion might be sufficient to defend one of the small Spanish fortresses; but twenty battalions would scarcely be enough to garrison one of the great towns of Brabant. And should the French obtain any advantage through a reduction of the forces of the Allies in this quarter, he left his audience

to imagine the clamour for peace which would be raised by the discontented party in Holland.

This reasoning was, as far as it went, unanswerable; but Rochester, delighted with having awakened emotion in the man he most hated, again rose. "I wonder," he said with a sneer, "to see the noble lord who has been always so distinguished for calmness and moderation, so much out of temper. But as men must be found to serve in Spain, perhaps his Grace will inform us where we can get them." "Upon a subject so important," returned Marlborough, with a resumption of his accustomed dignity, "it is impossible that I should speak without concern." To disclose secret projects, he proceeded to state, in so large an assembly, and one to which strangers were admitted, was impolitic, inasmuch as the enemy would not fail to get intelligence of them. But for the gratification of their lordships he might assure them that arrangements had been concerted with the Emperor for sending powerful succours to Charles, and that there was a hope that Prince Eugene might be prevailed upon to undertake the command in Spain. This announcement reduced the Tories to silence. Before the House separated on that day some resolutions had been passed which expressed in a plainer manner than had yet been done the aspirations of the Whigs in regard to the war. No peace, ran the first of these resolutions, can be safe or honourable for her Majesty and her Allies, if Spain and the Spanish West Indies be suffered to continue in the power of the House of Bourbon. The Commons, it soon appeared, were in the same warlike mood as the Lords. A few days afterwards an address was presented to Anne, embodying this resolution as the unanimous opinion of both Houses of Parliament, and Anne replied that she was of the same opinion herself. Henceforth, therefore, there could be no mistake about the object which the English Government proposed to achieve by the war. It stood committed to the task of wresting Spain from the domination of the House of Bourbon. The address and reply made it impossible for that or any future Government to conclude a peace under which a French prince should retain Spain, without virtually admitting that Queen, Lords, and Commons had not understood what was good for the national interests, or had

greatly over-estimated the national resources. It may be doubted whether the Treaty of Utrecht would have been thought so humiliating to England, but for this boastful and imprudent expression of opinion.

Whether Peterborough had done more good or harm to the cause of the Allies in Spain, was a subject which naturally engendered much animated discussion. Indeed had no party feeling been mixed up with the question, it is easy to conceive how various would have been opinions concerning this extraordinary compound of genius and extravagance. His conduct since his recall from Spain had not been of a kind to raise him in the good graces of the Ministers. He had been flying all over Europe to spread the tale of his grievances. He had paid a visit to Charles of Sweden. The Elector of Hanover had indulged him with long conversations, much to Marlborough's annoyance, who was uneasy whenever an Englishman spoke in private to his Highness. He had then passed a fortnight in the Allied camp, and favoured by the heavy rains which confined the Commander-in-Chief to his quarters, had inflicted upon the latter more of his society than was agreeable. The hero of Blenheim and Ramilies, in truth, thought the hero of Barcelona little better than a prattling, hare-brained, mischief-making politician. The unhappy Earl had then returned to England to find himself excluded from access to the sovereign until he had given a satisfactory explanation of sundry grave charges of mismanagement and malversation of money. He proceeded, with his usual disregard of offending those who had it most in their power to injure him, to the task of justifying himself. To set himself right with the public he published, through the medium of a certain Dr. Freind, a narrative of his brilliant exploits. The Tories at length took up his cause, and an investigation was forced upon the House. But the Lords soon found that to investigate any charge against Peterborough required more than human patience. There seemed no end to the evidence which the indefatigable culprit could bring in his defence. The table groaned beneath the mass of his papers. The senses of the judges were distracted by the interminable string of his witnesses. After ten days had been consumed to little purpose, the leading Whigs persuaded the

tired Peers to give over the examination without announcing any result. In truth, the prejudices of the rival factions excluded all chances of a fair judgment. There can be no doubt that the eagerness shown by the Tories to extol the Earl above his real merits did him injury. The Whigs would suffer no hero to shine by the side of Marlborough. The abandonment of the investigation amounted in effect to an acquittal of the Earl; but more than a bare acquittal his friends could not obtain. A vote of thanks to him for his services was opposed and defeated.

END OF VOL. I.

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